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Pp. 689, 696.

PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

TO INTEREST, TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

THE Biggest SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE WORLD.

See page 701.

VOL. I.—No. 44.] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING MAY 23, 1891. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

Ask your Tailor for "MADDOCKS'S 'BELWARP' SERGES AND COATINGS."

THE "BELWARP" SERGES AND COATINGS.

60 VARIETIES TO CHOOSE FROM.

THE LEADING FEATURES OF THE BELWARP COATINGS AND SERGES: They are PERFECTION of MANUFACTURE, combining the EXCELLENCE and HARDWEARING QUALITIES of the old ENGLISH MAKES with all improvements effected by the most modern Machinery.

DYED WITH WOADED DYES ONLY.

The Colours are therefore Permanent and Defy Salt Water and Climatic Changes. The BELWARP SERGES and COATINGS are SUITABLE for EVERY KIND of

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They are made in a variety of qualities, from the lowest to the highest-priced ones, to suit every class of wearer. The qualities can all be repeated, and are always uniform and reliable.

For LADIES' TAILOR-MADE COSTUMES and for BOYS' HARD WEAR they are the Best in the World.

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LIEUT.-COL. HUGH BAMBER, 40, HANLEY SQUARE, MARGATE, says:—"I have now used the **Salt Regal** for two years. I have much pleasure in stating that I have found it the most agreeable in taste of all Salines, and a certain cure for bilious headache and furred tongue, from whatever cause arising."

It develops Ozone—the principle of life—will cleanse the mouth, clear the throat, and sweeten the breath, and corrects all impurities arising from errors in diet.

It prevents, and instantly relieves, INDIGESTION, FLATULENCE, GIDDINESS, HEARTBURN, ACIDITY, PALPITATION, &c.

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DON'T RUB the clothes. Let Sunlight Soap clean them. That is HOW?

Avoid DRUDGERY. Wash the clothes according to the Sunlight method. You will soon know.

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has been recently enlarged and improved in many ways. It was always good value for a Penny. It is now one of the marvels of Modern Journalism, containing, as it does, more Literary matter than many Penny publications, and, in addition, a number of striking Illustrations.

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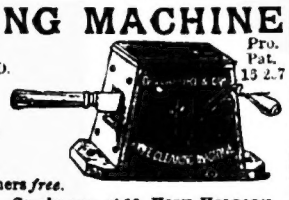

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Quality (colour Brown).	Prices (post free): Childn's.	Ladies'.	Gents'.
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C. Strapped with Leather		2s. 0d.	2s. 6d.
D. Superior Canvas (as per Illustration)		2s. 6d.	2s. 9d.
E. Velvet Uppers (Black)		3s. 0d.	3s. 3d.
Felt Slippers, best quality (any colour)	1s. 4d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 9d.
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F. W. D'EVELYN, Esq., M.B., C.M., etc., says:—"A most useful and effective remedy for CORNS, WARTS, AND CALLOSITIES. Some cases of many years' standing completely cured by a few applications."

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No dirt, no attention, no smell, no danger. Will last for years. Lighted and left about ten minutes may be drawn out and used again.

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SOLVE THIS RIDDLE, AND WIN £50.

GREAT CONSOLATION PRIZE OFFER.

What is that, that is nothing,
Yet it we feel and hear,
A something we cannot see
That causes dread and fear.
This thing was always nothing,
And will be always so,
Yet it we find in every land,
Wherever we may go.

Entrance fee, 1s. 6d. only, must accompany each attempt at solution.

£1,000 in consolation prizes, consisting of musical instruments, music, etc., etc. I will pay £50 to the sender of the first correct solution of the above riddle. Every other sender of correct solutions will receive (carriage paid), articles double the value of entrance fee. All the other competitors will receive consolation prizes of the full value of entrance fee. Competition closes end of July. FRANCIS NEWTON, Music Dealer, 58, Gregory Boulevard, Nottingham.

£100. CASH PRIZES. £100.

£60 will be given to winner, 30 prizes of £1 each to next nearest, and £10 to person sending largest number of lists and fees. Count how many times the word "THE" occurs in the sixth chapter of St. John (ordinary Bible, no headings or marginal notes). Send total on or before May the 27th. P.O. for 1s., and stamped addressed envelope for result. HENRY WHITE, 124, Hampstead Road, London, N.W.

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LAVANS LINCTUS,

For Chills, Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, & all Diseases of the Chest.

Will cure an ordinary Cold in a few hours.

A Safe and Pleasant Medicine for Children.

For business men easily taken. Will not interfere with daily duties.

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IRISH DAMASK TABLE CLOTH.

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Ladies' Size, 2s. 3d. per dozen; Hemstitched, 2s. 11d. per dozen; Gent's Size, 3s. 6d. per dozen; Hemstitch, 4s. 11d. per dozen.

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THE VALUABLE AND AGREEABLE PROPERTIES OF THE HEALTH-GIVING TOMATO may now be had in the form of a concentrated and portable Soup, easily made, constituting a healthful, delicious, and economical article of diet. In lever-top canisters of 1lb., 2s. 6d.; ½lb., 1s. 3d.; ¼lb., 8d.; and in metal boxes, containing one doz. packets, each sufficient to make a basin of rich soup, 2s.

SOLE MANUFACTURERS:

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Proprietors of Edwards' Desiccated Soups. Sold by all Respectable Grocers, &c.

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RISING SUN STOVE POLISH

IS THE

EASIEST, QUICKEST, CHEAPEST, AND BEST BLACKLEAD IN THE WORLD.

"I have used the RISING SUN STOVE POLISH and *prefer it to any other.* I have tried *several* kinds of Blacklead, but *none to equal this.* My kitchen *range looks charming.* I DID NOT FEEL THE LEAST TIRED after using it, as I hitherto have."—Mrs. L. HUCKLE, Milton Keynes, Newport Pagnell.

"It *really* is the *best I ever have used,* it leaves *no dust,* and does not need *any rubbing hardly,* as the *least rub* of the brush makes it *shine very brightly.*"—Mrs. MCLEAN, 12, Beaumont Place, Edinburgh.

NOTE.—You can produce *more polish* with TWO Penny Packets of the RISING SUN than with HALF DOZEN Penny Packets of ordinary Blacklead. Send TWO Stamps (to cover postage) for sample naming this Paper.

C. CHANCELLOR & CO., LONDON, E.C.

CLARK'S GLYCOLA.

NEITHER STICKY NOR GREASY.

FOR CHAPPED & CRACKED HANDS, ROUGHNESS OF THE SKIN, SUNBURN, &c.

PRESS OPINIONS.

"Queen."—We prefer it to any other.

"Ladies' Pictorial."—Very efficacious, renders the face and hands so pleasantly soft.

"Weldon's Journal."—A cleanly, economical, and excellent preparation, for it does what it professes to do, and keeps the skin beautifully supple.

A 6d. bottle in daily use lasts 3 months, a 1s. bottle 9 months. In bottles 6d., 1s., and 2s. 6d. from all chemists, or Post free for 9d., 1s. 3d., and 2s. 9d.

GLYCOLA SOAP.

FOR TOILET, BATH, & NURSERY.

Is superfatted, containing a judicious percentage of "Glycola" with no free Soda or Potash. Produces a creamy softening lather and a velvety feeling after washing.

Prevents and allays all skin irritations. Price 6d. per tablet, 1s. 6d. per box, Post 1s. 9d. Reject all substitutes, and insist upon having GLYCOLA & GLYCOLA SOAP.

Wholesale Agents—
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T. R. CLARK,
THE LABORATORY, CROUCH END, N.

AT THE SUMMIT DURING 16 DECADES

BEAUFOYS HOUSEHOLD MALT VINEGARS.

Best, Purest & Cheapest Obtainable.

87, SOUTH LAMBETH ROAD, S.W.

10/6 THE POCKET TYPEWRITER. 10/6

POST FREE. POST FREE.

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From the Pocket Typewriter Co., Ltd., Swan Arcade, Bradford.

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PEARSON'S WEEKLY.
TO INTEREST, TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

VOL. I.—No. 44.] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING MAY 23, 1891. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

BABY LOGIC.

She was ironing her doll's new gown,
  Maid Marian, four years old,
With her brows puckered down
In a painstaking frown
  Under her tresses of gold.

'Twas Sunday, and nurse coming in,
  Exclaimed, in tone of surprise,
"Don't you know it's a sin,
Any work to begin
  The day the Lord sanctifies?"

Then, lifting her wee face like a rose,
  Thus answered this wise little tot:
"Nannie, don't you suppose,
That the good Lord He knows
  This little iron ain't hot?"

WHERE DOES A MILLIONAIRE'S MONEY COME FROM?

TAKE the case of a young man starting in life at the age of twenty years. Let us suppose that he works 300 days per year, and receives 8s. per day, or £120 per year, in return for producing things which the community desire. Taking one year with another, let us suppose that he has one-sixth of his product unconsumed, which he accumulates in the shape of money, in order that he may be able to draw upon it for such things as he may require when he shall be past work.

After half a century of toil he will, by actual accumulation of his unconsumed products, be in possession of £1,000, or enough to keep him for ten years without working. This is clearly all that the average man can do under the most favourable conditions, and, as a matter of fact, far more than he can hope for in almost any civilised nation in the world.

But when we turn from the actual possibilities of the many to acquire money by means of producing wealth to the actual facts respecting the money held by individual persons, a strange and startling discrepancy is apparent. We have, for instance, in Jay Gould, the American millionaire, the case of a solitary [illegible] who in less than half a century is said to [illegible] or an amount equal to [illegible] 50,000 men [illegible]

AN ABSENT-MINDED YOUNG MAN.

[illegible] absent-minded man of the century lives [illegible]. He is a young man, but he sometimes forgets that he is living. Just now there is a [illegible] baby up at his house—a new arrival—and [illegible] absent-minded than ever.

[illegible] likes the new baby, and he takes every [opportu]nity to embrace it. The other morning he [took it] from the nurse and took the youngster into [illegible]. Sitting before his big desk, which is one [illegible] in which you pull down a revolving wooden [shutter w]hen you want to close it, he rattled the pens [and pap]er-weights for the baby's amusement until [there ca]me a sharp ring at the front door bell. [Dep]ositing the baby on the desk, he slammed down [the shutt]er and rushed to the door. It was a friend [who cal]led to see him on business, and he put on his [hat and w]alked out with him, forgetting all about the [baby on] the desk. When the nurse came to fetch it she [could no]t find it. The young man's hat and coat were [gone, an]d she feared he had taken the baby out into [the stree]t with him.

[The house] was in a tumult. When he returned half [an hour l]ater without the baby, he was met by the [nurse, wh]o demanded its whereabouts. The young [man scrat]ched his head for a moment, then he turned [and rushe]d to the desk, hastily unlocked it, and [rolled u]p the shutter. There lay the baby, slumbering [peacef]ully among the ink bottles, pens, and paper-weights. But the young man doesn't get the baby [illegible] unless they tie it with a string round his [illegible]

THE STORY OF AN OUTCAST.

I WASN'T always like this. There was a time when I was plump and bright and as pretty as the heart could wish.

I was a great favourite, too: everybody was glad to meet me, and the rich as well as the poor smiled to see me coming. Even among the upper ten I was recognised and welcomed, and they took me into their own families.

I was not idle then, either. I amused the rich, and helped the poor, and I was happy, for I felt that I was of some use.

One is happy when one forgets one's self, and I can truly say I valued myself only for what I could do for others.

As I worked hard I lost my brightness and beauty, but still I kept my friends, for people had grown to know my worth.

But one day there came a change. I will not pain you with the story; it is enough to say that I was basely wronged, that through no fault of my own the greed and selfishness of man caused me to be disgraced —dishonoured.

Then people shunned me. I was avoided as carefully as I had been sought. Even the poor have ideas of right and wrong, and I was scorned by them as well as by the more fortunate.

I had never been very often to church in my brighter and busier days, but now it was different. Every Sabbath found me at one church or another. The clergymen could not pretend not to see me, but they never were cordial—never seemed glad that I had come.

But yesterday, miss, even you, who had known me in my happier days refused to acknowledge me.

What's that? You deny it! You say that you never refused to recognise even the humblest and lowest. Let me jog your memory. It was at the booking office. Don't you remember the clerk was handing you your change when I—what! now you recollect, you guessed all along that I was nothing but the light half-sovereign that the clerk tried to pass off on you?

A DUMMY IRONCLAD.

THE following incident occurred during the American Civil War in February, 1863. An old coal barge which had been picked up in the Jones River, and the [illegible] set some of Admiral Porter's men to convert her into a "monitor." The whole scheme was carried out in twelve hours. In fact, her construction was hardly more solid than the "paper forts" built of canvas and boards by the Chinese during our war with them, and which collapsed after a shot or two as readily as would the "Rock of Gibraltar" or Mount Vesuvius at a firework display.

The barge was built up high with boards, while funnels and turrets constructed with pork barrels reared above, and two old canoes did duty for quarter-boats. A small hen house, taken from the back-yard of a planter's dwelling, stood for the pilot-house. Her furnaces were built of clay; they were only intended to make smoke. Then the furnaces were filled with pitch and other inflammable materials, and she was ready.

As soon as the "dummy," turned adrift on the Mississippi, came in range of the Vicksburg batteries, the alarmed garrison opened fire upon it. The black monitor glided down the stream, belching out fire and smoke, but gave not a shot in return. With amazement the Vicksburg soldiers found they could not make the slightest impression on the turreted monster. They did not know that it was full of water, and had not a man on board.

In ominous and silent disdain she seemed to be making for the Confederate ironclads; one of them, *The Queen of the West*, having part of her crew ashore, incontinently fled, with all her steam power, making the best of her way to the Red River. *The Indianola*, a vessel previously captured from the Northerners, was lying aground, and, not to be taken by this ruthless monster of a monitor, was ordered to be blown up, which was accordingly done. Thus was this bloodless victory gained by the dummy ironclad.

ANOTHER PRIZE FOR CYCLISTS.

WE will give a Twenty-five Pound Cycle, selected from the stock of the makers of the Premier machines, to the sender of the best anagram upon the words:

HILLMAN, HERBERT, AND COOPER'S PREMIER CYCLES.

The apostrophe in the word "Cooper's," may be used or not, as competitors like. Only the letters forming these words may be used, and only as often as they occur in them.

Competitions must reach us before or by Monday, June 8th, the envelopes containing them marked CYCLE. Competitors may send any number of anagrams they please.

We have purposely selected words that contain a large proportion of common vowels, so this task will not be as difficult as the last.

Competitors are requested to write each anagram on a separate slip, which contains nothing else but their name and address. Much as we like to hear from our readers, we find it no fun to hunt through long letters for anagrams. A machine, such as may become the property of the winner in this competition, is now on exhibition at each of the Premier London establishments—14, Holborn Viaduct; 5, Lisle Street, Leicester Square; and 133, Hammersmith Road.

YOUNG MAN (to servant): "Is Miss Clara engaged?"

Servant: "Hiving rist yer sowl, sorr, I hope she is. She's in the parlour now wid a young man's arm twicet round her waist."

EXCITED LADY: "Why don't you stop that dog fight?"

Bystander: "I was just a goin' to, mum; but you kin calm yer fears now. My dog is on the top at last, mum."

PROFESSOR C——, who stood six feet six inches in his stocking-feet, desiring to take passage for New York, went to Liverpool for that purpose. While standing on the dock he got into conversation with a stranger, asking him by what route he had better go on his contemplated voyage.

"Well," was the reply, "if I were you, I would put a loaf of bread on the top of my head and wade."

LADY VISITOR (at house of eminent physician): "I have called, doctor, to ask if there is any cure for sleep-walking. I have had the habit for years, and lately it has become worse."

Dr. Highprice: "It can be cured, madam. Take this prescription, and have it made up at Colde, Steele, and Co.'s."

"Colde, Steele, and Co.'s? Why, that is not a chemist's, it is an ironmonger's."

"Yes, madam. The prescription calls for a paper of tacks. Dose—two table spoonfuls scattered about the floor before retiring."

CLOSE by the sparkling brook, whose silvery waters danced in the sunlight and rippled over the golden sands, they sat in silence—George and Laura—drinking in the glorious beauty of the rustic scene and communing with Nature in one of her chosen shrines. Afar in the west the sun seemed to linger at the horizon's brim, as if unwilling to shut out from his gaze the lovely landscape that glowed with a softened and even melancholy radiance in his departing beams. A thrilling cry burst from the lips of the beautiful girl.

"George! George!" she almost shrieked.

"What is it, darling?" he asked, placing his arm tenderly round her waist. "Has the romantic, yet oppressive, loveliness of the scenery saddened your spirits?"

"No, George," she screamed, waving her hands wildly, and making a frantic jab at the small of her back; "I think it's some kind of a beetle!"

SALVATORI, THE DEAD SHOT.

All those whom Paris counted as its most aristocratic worldlings flocked to the Summer Gardens to see in the zenith of his glory Salvatori, the illustrious Italian marksman. And really Salvatori justified by his surprising art the delight he had inspired in Parisian circles; tall, erect, superb in figure, handsome as a Vandyck picture in his Court costume, and tossing his glass or porcelain balls into the air to shatter them with the bullets from his rifle as they rose or fell.

Never a false movement, never an ungraceful gesture, seemingly firing at random, without troubling himself to aim, and the bullets struck the bull's eye to right or left of him, before or behind him, at the will of the marksman—sometimes passing through the bottom of a bottle, the bullet entering by the opening at the neck; sometimes through the heart of a card nailed to a target or held between the thumb and finger; then, again, cutting the stems from clusters of roses as neatly and dexterously as if snipped with scissors.

No feat or difficulty seemed too great for his wonderful skill.

Luigi Salvatori, at the time we first see him, always carried with him in his journeyings about the world a young lad by the name of Peppo, a sort of assistant, whose duty it was to see to the paraphernalia, to remove the broken balls and bottles from the stage when done with, and before the public to hold the cards and flowers at which his master aimed in his various feats of marksmanship.

In short, this Peppo filled not only a distinguished, but a decidedly dangerous position in the work of the evening, and one in which the least false movement—his own or Salvatori's—would surely have cost him his life. Time and again the people of the theatre with whom he talked and amused himself between the acts, expressed to him their amazement at his nerve and daring.

"Salvatori must pay you," they said to him, "a good big salary, or you have boundless confidence in his skill."

"Bah!" cried Peppo, airily; "the ball that will kill me is not yet moulded; and Salvatori has never been known to miss his aim."

Never been known to miss his aim? No matter, his comrades were not convinced, and the group of dancers awaiting their call to the ballet shook their pretty heads with an air no less incredulous. Only one of them, little Paulette, seemed to partake of Peppo's confidence.

"I should not fear M. Salvatori either," said she, with a tone and a face so earnest that her companions began to banter her, and to cry out, teasingly:

"You are a sly-boots, Paulette. But we know what ails you. You are in love with M. Salvatori!"

* * * * *

"To-night, Wednesday, July 17th, Monsieur, the Prince of Luisitana will attend the Summer Garden to see the incomparable Salvatori in his wonderful and dangerous feats, and who will doubtless surpass all former efforts in honour of the royal spectator."

Such was the announcement that on the morning in question headed the columns of all the prominent journals, and that when evening came crowded the house from pit to dome as soon as the doors were opened. The public sat even upon the window-ledges, and Stirler, the lessee, while awaiting the hour for the performance to begin, strolled the wings and reviewed the scene.

"Such a night! such a night!" he cried to the throng of artistes flying in haste from room to room, filling the wings with the noise and bustle inseparable from the moment just before the rising of the curtain; "such rank! such beauty! Hurry, hurry, and dance your best; hurry, I say, hurry, the scene is just going to begin."

And the lessee, rubbing his hands and smiling delightedly, ascended to his private office. He had been there some twenty minutes, perhaps, examining the receipts for the evening, and smiling still more blandly as he ascertained the exact figures, when all at once the door burst open, and Salvatori precipitately appeared.

"We are lost!" he cried. "We are lost—lost—ruined!"

"Eh? What? Ruined?"

"Precisely. That rascal, Peppo, is as drunk as a lord. You know how it is with him—a taste of wine and the game is ended."

"So it is. What'll you do about it?"

"What can I do? It is ruin, I tell you—ruin for both of us. No one will consent to replace him."

"Stay! Wait a bit. We'll see about that."

And Stirler started hurriedly for the wings, Salvatori following behind him.

Five minutes later every one—singers, gymnasts, jugglers, and dancers—hurriedly crowded together in the huge green-room of the Summer Garden, gazing upon the strange spectacle of the lessee shaking above his head a crisp piece of paper that all could see for themselves was a new bank note.

"Peppo, who accompanies M. Salvatori in his performances," said he, "Peppo is ill and unable to come this evening. This note—five hundred francs, all told—for the one who will consent to replace him!"

There was an eager stir in the motley crowd, and hands were extended, drawn by an irresistible [illegible] for the money, but at the thought of how it was to be earned they quickly dropped again. As Salvatori said, no one would take the risk.

Stirler drew out a second note. "One thousand francs," said he. This time not even a stir—the silence unbroken. Comprehending that it was useless to insist—the size of the sum was as nothing compared to personal fear—the lessee turned despondently upon his heel.

At that instant a group of ballet-girls in the corner of the hall parted for the passage of a little figure coming from the shadow of the corridor, and advancing to his side.

"If you please, M. Stirler," said a soft, musical voice, "I will assist M. Salvatori."

"You, Paulette!"

"Yes, M. Stirler."

The crowd pressed about them to curiously regard this strange child, for a child she was, but seventeen years old, and so charmingly pretty with her curly blond hair, her fluffy, mist-like skirts, the silvery pink of a summer dawn, and her slender rounded form. She seemed, indeed, standing under those curious globes, one of those dainty exquisitely-tinted Dresden figures that are found among the treasures of a collector of rare china.

"Thanks, my child, a thousand thanks, and—a thousand francs beside!"

"No, M. Stirler, I do not want the money; I assist M. Salvatori because—well, because it amuses me."

"Ah, if it amuses you, good! It makes a difference!" and Stirler, enchanted to draw out of the affair without loosening his purse strings, returned the money to his pocket, whilst the others hurried away to finish the scenes before Salvatori's appearance, and the latter dragged Paulette behind a screen to give her some necessary instructions regarding the part she was about to play.

* * * * *

"You understand me?" demanded he, anxiously. "You are sure you know what to do? First, balls in the air that I will break; then the target and the card between the thumb and first finger, very delicately, the arm extended. After that the cluster of flowers and the rose between your teeth, your profile towards me, and held without a movement till the ballet parts the stem and the blossom falls, cut from within an eighth of an inch of your lips. No danger, however—not a particle. I never miss my aim. You have seen me and Peppo—that he is never afraid?"

"Oh, yes! I know. But——"

"But what, my child?"

Paulette hesitated—dropped her eyes; then, timidly:

"At the last moment, please, M. Salvatori, do not—look me in the face."

Not look her in the face? Salvatori smiled. He had begun to comprehend.

"But why not?" said he, gently—almost tenderly. "Why not, little one?"

"I—I am afraid of seeming afraid," Paulette answered—a trifle incoherently as to phrasing, perhaps, but read clearly as print by the man beside her.

"So be it, I promise you," said he. "But tell me, Paulette, tell me why you refused the thousand francs that Stirler offered you? It would have made you rich."

"No, on the contrary; it would have—"

"Well, go on—'on the contrary.' Finish what you were going to say."

But happily for Paulette the voice of the call-boy saved her from further questioning—the curtain was up.

* * * * *

The scene between them was simply an enormous success. Never had Salvatori shown such daring and prompt decision, and the entire Press next morning, without a dissenting voice, could not say enough in praise of the charming child who, at the last moment, had thrown herself into the breach created by Peppo's absence.

As it seems to be necessary that romance should enter into everything, so they invented stories to fit the occasion regarding the antecedents of the "courageous beauty." All declared her a young girl of aristocratic parentage, seized with an irresistible fancy for the handsome Italian, and ready to abandon her family on his account, one of the papers going so far as to name a certain duchess from whom she was lineally descended.

Salvatori also recognised how the appearance of Paulette beside him increased and emphasised his own success; how it doubled the attraction, because of the feminine grace and mystery surrounding her, so enticing to the eye of the public and stimulating to curiosity.

Nor did it take him long to become convinced that Paulette was a girl whose only thought and desire was the care of an aged and infirm mother. More than that, he had been deeply touched by the proof of love she had given him in assuming that rascal Peppo's duty.

How pretty she was too! And, as he really believed that he would never again find a woman so devoted and loving as she, he married her!

A dream of happiness suddenly realised, for this guileless child! Salvatori was her idol—her god. Her only joy in other times had been to approach him, to speak to him a single word. One look from him brought sunlight for the entire day, enough to last her till the morrow.

But joy does not often kill. Paulette accustomed herself to her new honours, and reserved for them a love that was adoration. Salvatori, too, seemed to adore Paulette. They were truly the most united of couples, and the most charming to see.

The happy husband, loaded with honours and triumphs, a guest at the tables of sovereigns, told the wife, ardently and truthfully, that it was to her he owed it all.

"My happiness, even, comes to me through you, Paulette. I love you; I shall never, never love any one but you, you who have held yourself so straight and bravely before the muzzle of my rifle!"

* * * * *

Alas, that when one has climbed to the pinnacle of bliss, one must descend again—frequently with a plunge!

Paulette had been too happy, and after two years of joy without a cloud, and mutual love, felt all the more cruelly the sting of the sorrow that had come upon her.

Salvatori loved her no longer.

He was still kind to her as in the past—still amiable and apparently attentive to her wishes, nay, at times anticipating them, but this was not that other love. Paulette felt that she was no more mistress of her husband's heart. Correspondence withheld from one, long and unexplained absences on the part of a husband—it does not take a wife very many days to discover that her reign over her husband's affections has reached its limit.

But Paulette, you see, was such an innocent; she had never read a single romance or studied the world around her; she did not reason, and a notion of revolt never once entered her head, any more than that of resignation. She did not say to herself:

"Wait, Paulette, wait; he will surely return to you—you will have your happiness back again."

She did not even make an effort to regain it. No, not a sigh, not a tear, nothing.

"He loved me once," she thought. "For two years his heart was mine, and mine alone. Alas, that this world's happiness should be so short! To-day it is done with—everything ended. Then, if it is ended, why am I on this earth?"

Should she speak to Salvatori of her gnawing sorrow? Should she utter a complaint? Oh, no, never! He had shown himself enough of a prince when he had descended to her level and made her, a little ballet girl, his honoured wife. He had been very good to her, very patient, and for two whole years he had loved her and given her an undivided heart.

Nevertheless, though Paulette knew he loved her no longer, she felt no anger against her husband. She suffered cruelly, true; but then it was all her own fault—she should not have felt things so keenly.

Two years of perfect happiness! How few could count upon even two years with certainty? She had had them; she would keep them. How? The simplest way in the world; as the gambler keeps his winnings when luck goes against him—by throwing up her hand!

One thing only troubled her in accepting the deliverance open to her—Salvatori might blame himself, accuse himself of a crime, or suffer remorse. But she put it from her, this harassing thought.

"I will write it down," she murmured; "I will write everything; no one must censure him."

* * * * *

After a period of absence, Salvatori returned to Paris. The Summer Garden was packed, and a perfect ovation greeted the handsome marksman as he entered for his work, Paulette beside him.

First the balls, which Paulette tossed and Salvatori shattered; then the target, the bottles, which the bullets entered by the openings in their necks with swift, unerring decision. After these the clusters of flowers, and then the rose between Paulette's teeth severed from the stem "within an eighth of an inch"—Salvatori's own words—of the rosy lips.

The same old programme, and this, as of old, the closing feat; but Paulette's lips were not, as usual, wreathed with a happy smile. As the moment came she drew a rose from the front of her corsage—a rose with a stem so very short the people shivered as they saw it—and stepped to position.

"One, two—are you ready, Paulette?" Salvatori cried, as his wife stood straight and white before him, her eyes, filled with a strange sadness, turned upon a box to the right of the stage, in which sat a beautiful woman smiling at her husband.

A smile, too, which Salvatori returned, as once more he repeated his question, "Are you ready, Paulette?" Once more he began his counting, and raised his rifle.

Ready! Oh, yes, Paulette was ready, and an instant later—dead upon the boards. She had bent her head as the last words left her husband's lips, and would suffer no more.

THE VALUE OF A CROW.

In 1845 the House of Commons appointed a Committee to inquire into the operation of the Game Laws, and it remained for Mr. Grantley Berkeley to demonstrate to mankind what was the real value of a crow. It was to the late Mr. Bright's inquisitiveness that the world owes this valuable addition to its general stock of information.

Mr. Berkeley said that crows were exceedingly useful to the farmers in destroying wire-worms, and that where there were no such agents for the abatement of this agricultural nuisance, the farmer was obliged to hire boys to do the work for the truant crow. As a rat-catcher is paid by the number of tails he produces, so were these boys paid by the number of worms they destroyed, the tariff being three-halfpence a hundred.

Mr. Bright asked Mr. Berkeley how much a boy could make at this rate per day, and he was told ninepence. He was then asked if a boy made ninepence a day at the rate of three-halfpence per hundred, how many worms did he destroy per day? This was altogether too intricate a problem for Mr. Berkeley's brains; so, finding himself puzzled, he thought the best way of getting out of it was to fly into a rage, which he accordingly did, telling Mr. Bright he had not come there to answer arithmetical questions.

But this did not satisfy the inquisitor who, seeing a great discovery about to be made, was determined through no fault of his to lose it to the world. He therefore asked Mr. Berkeley if a boy did his work as well as a crow. Mr. Berkeley replied that a crow at such work was worth fifty boys. This was very startling, and Mr. Bright, wishing to know the precise but newly-discovered value of a crow, asked the witness if a boy was worth ninepence per day, and a crow worth fifty boys, how much was the crow worth to the farmer in sterling money?

Mr. Berkeley here got into passion number two, but it was of no use. Paper, pen, and ink were handed to him, and he was assisted in his calculations, when it appeared that a crow was worth to the farmer very nearly two pounds per day. At this rate Mr. Berkeley was then asked the yearly value of the bird, which turned out to be seven hundred pounds.

He had before said that fifty would be a low average for the number of crows in some districts upon each farm, and the last problem put to him was what was the aggregate value per year to the farmer of his proper quota of these useful birds? This evoked the most startling conclusion of all, for it appeared that the farmer was a gainer of thirty-five thousand pounds from his fifty crows. Happy man! What a pity he cannot pay his rent in crows!

HOW FISH ARE BRED.

No instance can be cited in which the influence of human skill and care in aiding the operations of Nature has a more remarkable result than in their application to the breeding of fish. The enormous number of eggs laid by a single fish is such as not only to explain the countless shoals that periodically visit our coasts, but almost to lead to wonder that fish are not yet more plentiful. On the other hand, the risks and dangers that await each new-laid egg are so many, that a corresponding wonder may be awakened how it is that any fish arrive at maturity.

Of our nobler river-fish, such as the trout, and his congeners, it is the estimate of those who have studied the subject that not more than one egg out of a thousand becomes a fish. By the recent discoveries and improvements of men of science in Russia and in France, and of men of practical skill in England, 960 little fishes may now be counted on from 1,000 eggs.

It is very interesting to pay a visit during February to one of the few establishments which are devoted to the breeding of river-fish. The spawning period varies, of course, in different waters; but in the same stream there is a difference of twelve or fourteen days in the time in which the earliest and the latest eggs of perhaps the same fish are what we may call hatchable. Thus a large series of eggs and fry may be seen at one time in different stages of healthy development.

The hatching establishment visited by the writer resembles at first sight a good-sized greenhouse from which the plants have been removed, leaving the wooden ladder-like stands empty. But these stands, instead of consisting of plain boards support a series of troughs, each covered with a moveable lid, through which troughs gentle streams of water are constantly flowing.

With the great increase lately obtained in the productive power of the process, economy of room has become important. The troughs, therefore, are filled with a series of open trays made of perforated zinc protected by a tar varnish, each of which is from the size of a peppercorn to that of a vetch; so that from thirty to forty will lie, in one layer, in a single square inch. And, as when hatched it is rather the shape than the size of each unit of infant fish-life that is varied, from two to three thousand individuals may be seen disporting themselves in each tray. A million healthy young fish, in this stage of their existence, are really disposable in a very small space.

The fish-breeder prepares the spawn after a process due to a Russian [illegible], and in a manner that leads to the [illegible] result above stated. All the care then necessary is, in the first place, to watch the temperature of the water. Frost would, of course, be fatal to either egg or fry; but the chief objection to low temperature, down to the actual line of frost, is that it retards development. On the other hand, too great warmth is too stimulating, and a temperature of from 40 deg. to 50 deg. Fahr. is that which it is desirable to maintain.

A dark line becomes first visible at what we must call the top of the egg, if a sphere can be said to have a top. Day by day this line increases in size until it becomes a miniature fish, bearing in this early stage the characteristic proportions and colours of its species, but sitting, as it were, on a sort of balloon, which is the remains of the egg. From this is supplied the nutriment which is built up into a fish during the lapse of some thirteen weeks; and when the last remains of the balloon are absorbed, the little fish, in perfect form, begins to hunger and must be fed.

Up to this period good spring water is admirable for keeping up the health of the fry. But the little fish would soon starve in pure spring water. Food must be administered; and, as the trout are carnivorous, and even unblushingly cannibal, liver and hard-boiled eggs are given by some fish-breeders. But the true course to adopt is to cultivate the natural food of the fish—the minute insects and crustacea, which increase and multiply in ponds, ditches, streams, and standing waters.

From the hatching-house, in due time, the fry are removed to the nursery ponds, in which the food is administered. The chief sale is for the yearling fish, and it is necessary to be very careful regularly to clear the ponds of them in due time, as, if one or two be overlooked, they have a fine time of it in devouring their younger brothers and sisters.

VERY DANGEROUS.

An English lady, taken ill while touring among the Canary Islands, gives an amusing description of one of the strange notions of her nurse. The opinion that "nothing is so bad as water" is lived up to by some who have never put it into words.

"A few days after the commencement of my illness, feeling able to raise my head off the pillow, I innocently asked the senora for some warm water and a brush and comb. I little knew the storm I was bringing down upon myself.

"'You must not wash; it will kill you; and it is very bad to do your hair.'

"'But,' I said, 'it is warm water I want; I am not going to use cold.'

"'Hot or cold, there is nothing so bad as water.'

"I explained that we always used it in England, in our hospitals as well as in private houses, for those who were ill. No; nothing would induce the senora to give me water.

"'If you were in bed a month,' I said, 'do you mean to say that one should not wash or use a brush?'

"'Certainly not!' the senora replied.

"Argument was useless; but an hour later the servant came in, and I made my husband ask her for hot water, which she brought in all good faith, thinking it was for him. When, however, she returned a few minutes later, and found me at my toilet, her grief and consternation were really comical.

"I learned afterwards that she went to the senora, and, with despair in voice and gesture, exclaimed:

"'The Senora Inglese will die; she has washed!'"

THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE.

Napoleon I. was within an ace of becoming a theatrical manager when fortune first dawned on him. Briefly told, the story is as follows:—

A few days after the 9th Thermidor, four young men, who were literally without a penny to put in their pockets, were strolling, with very long faces, in the Palais Royal Garden. Three of them were destined to become illustrious, for they were called Louis David, Talma, and Bonaparte, the latter being at the moment a half-pay general of brigade, to which rank he had only recently been promoted. It was not political events that made them so gloomy, but sheer hunger, for their clubbed capital only amounted to fifteen sous, and they ran the risk of going without a dinner, when an idea suddenly struck Talma.

In those days the little theatre of the Palais Royal was managed by Mdlle. Montansier; indeed, she it was who first rendered it popular, and her name will always be associated with the house. Bonaparte seems to have been already a favourite with the lady, and Talma suggested that he should borrow a few crown pieces from her. The idea was not quite to the liking of the future emperor; but when he found that Talma and David were already in her debt, he consented, and soon joined his friends with three six-franc pieces at his disposal, a sum which seemed so meagre that Talma proposed risking two-thirds of it in one of the neighbouring gambling houses; if he won they would dine like princes, and if he lost, why, they could still find something to eat with the six francs left them.

His companions assented, and off he went to the board of green-cloth, his three hungry comrades awaiting his return with anxiety, until he appeared, radiant, with eight crowns instead of two, and a "spread" of delicate quality, washed down with choice Burgundy, champagne, etc., accordingly followed at Ferrier's, a famous restaurant.

The dinner was a silent one, Bonaparte, as usual, never opening his mouth except to eat and drink, until David began chaffing him about his rumoured marriage with the Viscountess Beauharnais, a match which the painter considered a very foolish one for a penniless officer on the retired list, and who was on such extremely bad terms with Barras that he had little or no prospect of obtaining a command. Instead of the widow Josephine, with her two almost grown-up children—Eugene and Hortense—David said he could find a woman "with money" who would be only too glad to accept the young general's hand. Bonaparte guessed at once that it was Mdlle. Montansier that he alluded to, and, after a few moments' reflection, told his friends to sound her on the subject, a commission David promised to execute that very evening.

He had hardly spoken the word when the waiter entered to announce that one of Barras' aide-de-camps was below, bearer of a sealed letter to Bonaparte. The officer was introduced, Bonaparte read the missive, and announced to his astonished comrades that he had received command of a brigade, and was ordered to leave for Genoa next day.

"So, my dear David," he added, "my star has risen once more; you may give up the Montansier scheme, and I commission Talma to pay her my little debt."

"Is genius hereditary?" asks a scientific journal. We have not time to investigate the subject, but we are inclined to think it is. At all events, our youngsters are wonderfully smart.

Landlord: "I'm sure you must have played football when at college?"

Tenant: "What makes you think so?"

Landlord: "Because you are always a quarter back."

"Oh, yes," said Harry, when, in reading a novel, he came to the expression, "the one poor lamp only served to make darkness visible"; "Oh, yes; I understand that. It was in a railway carriage, of course."

A West of England doctor tells a story of his own experience. One night a man belonging to a club which paid him so much a month to attend the families of its members, called on him in a high state of indignation. The health of this gentleman's household was so robust that he was getting no value for his money, and he demanded a bottle of medicine forthwith. He admitted that the medicine was not needed for any special ailment, only he wanted "something for his money." The doctor naturally refused the medicine, whereupon, merely as a matter of personal gratification, his visitor insisted on having a tooth pulled.

A smart schoolboy story has just seen the light in a Berlin paper. A certain lady in the suburbs of Berlin had sent her young hopeful to spend the afternoon with some friends in another part of the town. Of course, as it was a bit of a party, the boy was dressed in his best. By the time he should return home the rain came down in torrents, and mamma was in a terrible anxiety as to the drenching her son would have; but telephones are plentiful and cabs are cheap in Berlin, so she telephoned to her friend to give the boy the sixpence for a cab (50 pfennig), and to her joy she was in time; her friend soon answered back that she had got a cab and sent him off, and in less than half an hour he came rushing up the stairs, but drenched to the skin and streaming with water.

"But," cried mamma, "they said you were sent in a cab. Did you not come in a cab?"

"Oh, yes, ma! But when I ride with you, you always make me get inside; this time I rode on the box!"

THE PRINCE OF PIPES.

Has your tobacconist ordered a stock of *Pearson's Pumice-stone Pipes?* If not, you should stir him up, for the sale is going along so rapidly that the first few competitions will be held almost immediately the pipe is placed on sale. Messrs. Posener & Co., Mansell Street, London, E.C., are the makers.

This Pumice-stone Pipe is the most important innovation in the pipe-making industry since a Kaffir, of greater intellectual powers than the rest of his kind, thought of constructing a pipe that could be carried about instead of [illegible] of putting a little lighted heap of tobacco on the ground, covering it with clay, [illegible] funnel through which the smoke might be drawn, and grovelling upon the ground in order to inhale it.

Next week we shall offer our readers a novel puzzle in connection with this pipe.

QUESTIONS WORTH ANSWERING.

REPLIES.

389. How many Advertisements appear in the Press of this Country Weekly?

It would be a somewhat difficult task to state the exact number of advertisements which appear weekly in our newspapers. Advertisements now occupy so large a proportion of space in most journals, and they are so varied, that to count them all, from the huge pictorial advertisement to the four lines of a servant seeking a situation, would be a task indeed. I have, however, made a very careful calculation, from an intimate knowledge of the London and provincial press, and I should say that the seven morning papers of London, taken altogether, have from 25,000 to 30,000 advertisements daily. The London evening papers contain about 4,000 advertisements between them, making, say, on the average, 30,000 in all. The principal daily provincial journals have some of them as many as the London dailies, while the remainder are not very far behind. These altogether have about 100,000 advertisements daily. Then we have the Sunday papers, and the vast number of weeklies—society, financial, sporting, and religious—in which the advertisements in the aggregate cannot be less than half a million. Altogether the press of the country can be estimated as containing about a million and a quarter of advertisements weekly.

390. During what Proportion of Time is Rain actually Falling in this Country?

We have in this country, on an average, 155 rainy days in the year, and the duration of time during which rain is falling on each of them may be taken to average about three hours. This means that if all the rain that falls at intervals throughout the year were to be concentrated into one prolonged shower, we should have a continuous downpour for twenty days and twenty nights, the amount of rainfall amounting to about a couple of inches for every day and night.

391. Do Animals Converse with One another?

There is undoubtedly a sympathetic understanding between animal kind, and this is especially noticeable among the higher orders. It has even been found that insects have the power of communicating with each other, and it is well known that birds with great unselfishness inform each other where food is to be found, and give signals of the approach of danger. The autumn flights of swallows could never be arranged so marvellously without some means of communication. "Who tells the hour, who marks the certain way?" Rooks, it is well known, have their assemblies and annual "parliaments," and the domestic hen has different sounds for different occasions, such as calling her chicks to food, warning them of danger, and showing her anger. Many instances are on record of the capacity that dogs possess of speaking to each other. Only recently a dog was brought to a London hospital, suffering from a wound, by another four-footed sympathiser which had been cured at the same place, and a small dog which had received a severe mauling from a bigger animal has been known to fetch a comrade, and return to the fray and all but destroy him. Coming still higher in the scale of intelligence, we find the monkey making deliberate speech. In some parts a meeting in the woods is held daily, and one of the tribe holds forth eloquently from a topmost bough, while the others sit around. At the conclusion of his speech he makes a sign, when the whole concourse loudly applauds.

392. What is the Magnifying Power of the Strongest Microscope ever Made?

A projection microscope was recently exhibited at the Crystal Palace, and at various continental towns, with the startling announcement that it magnified to the extent of 50,000 diameters; but students in this department of science who are best qualified to judge assert that this announcement was a very exaggerated one. I have the authority of the secretary of the Royal Microscopical Society for the statement that a photograph exists of a *podura* scale, magnified to 33,000 diameters by F. Wenham, the originator of the modern form of binocular microscope, but that the image, with this magnification, is extremely indistinct, and is, in fact, for scientific purposes, absolutely worthless. It appears doubtful whether, with the finest optical appliances existing at the present time, any direct magnification with the microscope beyond 1,500 to 2,000 diameters is of any value.

393. Which Battle of Modern Times and between Civilised Peoples has been Won Against the Greatest Odds?

That of Marsala, fought May 11, 1860. In this, which has been described as the most marvellous and heroic battle in all history, Garibaldi, with 1,000 Italian volunteers, six small cannon, and 1,200 peasants, utterly defeated 50,000 Austrian troops, with numerous artillery, posted in strong fortresses, and supported by 500 guns. The thing seems wholly incredible, but it is nevertheless a historic fact, without exaggeration. After his victory Garibaldi crossed the mountains, and took Palermo on the 27th of the same month. Next to Marsala comes Inkermann, in the Crimean War. The Russian Army were about 60,000 strong, and the detachments of the allied forces only amounted to 14,000. A portion of the British Household Guards, about 1,400 strong, made a most heroic stand for about six consecutive hours against a body of Russians that was probably ten times as numerous. From the little generalship displayed on the occasion, and the brilliant valour with which our troops behaved, Inkermann has been termed "The Soldiers' Battle."

394. If the Whole Composition of the Human Body Changes Every Seven Years, How is it that Tattoo Marks are Permanent?

Every seven years the whole composition of the human body is changed. This change is effected through the medium of the millions of minute cells which constitute the various organs of the body, being brought about by the elaboration of new cells and the destruction of old ones which have done their work and are of no further use. These cells multiply chiefly by the process of cell division, one cell becoming modified in structure, and eventually giving origin to two or more cells, which, in every particular, inherit the properties of the parent cell. Thus, if the first cell be coloured, the resulting cells will be coloured to the same degree. Applying this knowledge to the question, the cells of the skin, which have been coloured by the application of Chinese ink (or any other permanent tattooing medium), impart their coloured nature to their descendants, and thus preserve the tattoo marks on the body in their exact position year after year.

395. How Many Children are Educated Annually by the School Boards?

The daily average attendance at English School Boards is 1,424,835, while in Scotch School Boards it amounts to 503,100, or a total of 1,927,935. In Ireland there are no School Boards. Children attend these schools between the ages of five and fourteen. But a large proportion of the cleverer children manage to attain a standard of proficiency which enables them to leave school before they have reached the age of fourteen. So probably the average time of attendance is not more than seven years. This means that about 275,000 children are turned out by the Board Schools every year.

397. Would the Earth, Viewed from the Planets, Shine as brightly as they do?

As seen from the Moon the Earth appears four times greater in diameter and thirteen times wider in surface, and consequently more luminous than our satellite does to us, and shows phases analogous to those exhibited by the Moon, but in inverse order. In the case of the long lunar night of 354 hours, the Earth soars majestically in the heavens, undergoing her phases from the first to the last quarter, and at midnight shines with an intense light fourteen times stronger than that of the full moon. In fact, with so strong a light do we illuminate that part of our satellite which is dark at this epoch that it becomes visible from here, owing to the reflection of the terrestrial rays from its surface, this reflection of a reflection being styled "ashen light." Seen, however, from her sisters, the planets, the Earth suddenly loses the magnificent aspect that she exhibits from the Moon. To Mercury she is an external planet shining with a light of a star of the first magnitude. She sparkles in Mercury's sky as Jupiter does in ours. After Venus she is the most brilliant to the Mercurians, if any exist. From Venus, the Earth [illegible] the most brilliant of the stars. Her brilliancy [illegible] that exhibited by Venus at the epoch of her maximum luminous intensity, and while this beautiful planet is to us a morning and evening star, the Earth to her is a splendid star of night. From Mars the aspect of the earth is analogous to that exhibited to us by Venus. Viewed from Jupiter, which is at a mean distance of 495,000,000 miles from the Sun, our little globe no longer soars amidst the celestial spaces. A neighbour of the Sun, almost eclipsed by its blinding rays, she precedes its rising and follows its setting as a feeble morning and evening star. To Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, our globe, immersed as she is in a luminous bath of solar rays, is entirely invisible. Neither, of course, can she be seen from even the nearest of the fixed stars. The earth, in fact, is one of the most insignificant of the countless bodies that strew the boundless expanse of the sky.

396. In what Single Shipwreck was the Greatest Number of Lives Lost?

The greatest number of lives was lost on H.M.S. *Victory*, which sunk off the Isle of Alderney, on 5th October, 1744. She was a man-of-war of 1,921 tons, and carried 100 guns. Admiral Balchen (commander), some 100 officers, and the whole of the crew of nearly 1,000 men perished. The famous *Royal George*, carrying 108 guns, was wrecked on the 29th of August, 1782, off Spithead, while at anchor. She had sprung a leak and was lying on her side in order that the necessary repairs might be executed. A sudden squall struck her, causing the guns to roll on one side, and she went down. Admiral Kempenfeldt, together with the crew and some women and others, who had come on board to see their relations, numbering in all about 600, were drowned. In 1811, a most disastrous series of shipwrecks occurred. The *Pandora*, a sloop of war, went down off Jutland, on the 13th February, when thirty persons perished; on the 4th December, 300 persons lost their lives in the frigate *Saldanha*, off the Irish coast; while three weeks later, the *St. George*, of ninety-eight guns, the *Defence*, of seventy-four guns, and the *Hero* stranded on the coast of Jutland, when Admiral Reynolds and all the crews, numbering about 2,000, persons with the exception of eighteen seamen, perished.

398. What is the Average Life of a House?

A substantially-built brick house has a life of from 150 to 200 years, if properly maintained, and under certain favourable circumstances may exist longer; but with the ordinary run of town houses built under the leasehold system, 100 years may be taken as a fair average. After these periods structural reinstatements, more or less extensive, according to the manner in which the original structure was built, may give a further life of thirty to fifty years; this, however, can hardly be counted in "the life of a house." Good stone-built houses last longer, and, in the older parts of Edinburgh, it is not uncommon to find houses (formerly the mansions of the nobility) dating back to the sixteenth century; but the healthfulness of dwelling-houses sodden with the contaminations of centuries is more than doubtful. Speculative or "jerry" built houses last in an inverse ratio to the dishonesty or impecuniosity of the builder. In some cases they have met a violent death at the early age of ten years.

399. Which British Bird Brings up Most Young Ones in the Year?

There is no doubt that the Sparrow brings up more young ones in the course of the year than any of our birds. It generally lays from March until September, broods being brought up with scarcely any interval. The nest contains on an average five eggs.

400. Is the Atmosphere ever Perfectly Still at all Heights?

It may safely be said that the air is never at all heights quite still. The velocity would have to be less than eighteen inches per second, for the movement to be imperceptible. There are, however, different strata of air moving at various velocities, and balloonists often ascend when the air is in a tranquil condition, to find themselves travelling between fifty and sixty miles an hour when they reach a certain height. They also tell us that a balloon is often under the influence of currents of air which move in different directions, sometimes as many as three or four being encountered at one time. The movement of the atmosphere is supposed to be least in Central Asia.

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive replies to any of the questions asked here from readers who have the knowledge and ability to answer them. We shall print the best reply to each question, and shall pay for all matter printed at our ordinary rate of two guineas a column. The same reader may send replies to any number of queries. Envelopes should be marked "Replies," in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us by first post on the Tuesday following their publication. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

QUESTIONS.

421. What is the value of the clothing worn out in this country every year?

422. Are there any means of ascertaining the age of growing trees?

423. In which of our cathedrals does one hear the finest singing?

424. What causes the sensation known as "pins and needles"?

425. What metal will stand the greatest heat without fusing?

426. Is it true that sea-water contains silver and gold?

427. Do snakes really fascinate their prey?

428. How much hay should an acre of good grassland yield?

429. Who has been Premier of this country for the longest period?

430. Can seeds germinate when the air is excluded from them?

A REAL NOVELTY IN ADVERTISING.

When the defendant took his stand, the magistrate said:

"Prisoner, you are charged with having removed the sword from the hand of the Wellington statue, substituting a pair of eighteen-penny braces, with a placard calling attention to your establishment across the way."

"Well, sir," replied the offender, with an ingratiating smile, "of gorse I vants to get along in peesness."

"After which," continued the magistrate, sternly, "you substituted a lot of neckties for the braces, and attached to the other hand some bills referring to your new stock of tennis shoes and hair-oil."

"Dose hair-oil is first-rate," said the defendant. "I vould like to sell you a pottle."

"And yesterday," continued the magistrate, consulting the indictment, "you obstructed the thoroughfares and created a disturbance by placing a paper collar and a top hat on the statue in question."

"Dose top hats is cheap at twelve shillings, sir. Moses Levy charges fifteen and six vor dour same kind," returned the trader cheerfully; "I beat dose fellers efery dimes."

"And at night," went on the magistrate, "at night, it appears, you placed in the figure's hand a transparency containing a further advertisement of your wares. Now, this is most improper and reprehensible."

"Dot's right, sir," said Mr. Solomons, delightedly. "Pitch into me, af you blease. Shpeak loud, so dose noosbaper vellers gan hear you;" and he smiled benignantly upon the reporters.

"Good gracious!" thundered the magistrate, as a frightful idea struck him, "is it possible you have the audacity to use the machinery of this court as an advertising dodge?"

"Dot's it, dot's it!" exclaimed the culprit, rubbing his hands exultantly. "I made der gomplaint myself. Dese hard times a man must advertise, sir."

A PARISIAN NEWSPAPER.

The office of the Paris Figaro is a model of luxury. The reception room is softly carpeted and luxuriously furnished, and on the walls hang valuable oil-paintings. There are no reporters dodging in and out, and the managing editor takes things easily. The editorial writers, eight to ten in number, divide up the days of the week, and each man contributes his two-column editorial when he is on duty, and he reads his own proof and signs the article, so that he alone is held responsible. He, too, is easy over the matter, for he writes about what he pleases, without regard to the news of the day.

There are no reporters. A few special men look after society affairs and the reports of the legislative bodies. The police report accidents and murders, and there is no other city news, except a few items, which general reporters sell to all the newspapers in the city by the line. The police are depended upon for all criminal reports, but unless they wish to give these to the public, they keep them back. They do not allow any examination of their reports, and only permit what is to their interest to appear. The reporter is given no opportunity to make investigations, for the police guard all sources of information.

THE MAKING OF GREAT MEN.

It has been remarked as somewhat singular that the curiosities of chance have never suggested themselves to any writer enticingly enough to give the world a book under that title. That such a book would prove a romance of history, no one who reads can doubt, for how many great concerns have been begun or ended, how many momentous battles won and lost, how many great discoveries made and secrets lost, how many things, great and little, done and undone by chance happenings, in themselves nothing? It has been said that there was never an individual born whose whole career did not hinge upon a chance or accident. Whether or not an assertion so broad and sweeping be true, it is a fact that the history of men who have stood in the foremost ranks is rich with instances of the results of happy chance or accident.

Thus Wallenstein the Magnificent, the great captain who never lost a battle, was until the age of manhood little better than an idiot, until a chance fall down a stone staircase injured his head, but cleared his clouded intellect. Mabillon was a mere idiot until a similar happy chance fall restored him to reason. The golden genius of Charles Dickens might have remained unsuspected but for chance. Dickens in early life was enamoured of the stage. After many attempts he succeeded in gaining a promise from the manager of Covent Garden Theatre to accord his histrionic power a private hearing. A chance exposure to a rain storm brought on a cold which prevented Dickens from keeping his engagement, and thus the stage lost an aspiring actor, and literature gained a king.

Thorwaldsen, the great Danish sculptor, after working four months unrecognised in Rome, determined, in despair, to return home and lay down the sculptor's chisel for ever. A chance error by a consular clerk in drawing his passport detained him twenty-four hours. During that interval of waiting Mr. Hope walked into the studio, admired his Jason in clay, and aroused the desponding Dane's hope by ordering a copy in marble. Thorwaldsen unpacked his tools, and never afterwards, in his long career, lacked patronage.

Rachel, the great tragedienne, was, when a child, a street singer, and as such might have passed into womanhood and old age had not a party of critics, dining together, chanced to hear her loud, clear voice beneath their window. They observed the child's wonderful face and eyes, and, in a kindly spirit, aroused, perhaps, by the wine they had drunk, proposed to her protectors to place her in the Conservatory as a pupil.

Sir Walter Raleigh would probably have remained out of favour with the Court had Elizabeth, on her walk to the Tower, chanced to take a path less muddy. Every reader of history knows the story of how the gallant Sir Walter spread his cloak beneath the Royal feet, and was rewarded with his sovereign's smile, and speedy restoration to favour.

Potemkin, the favourite of Catherine II., and founder of the powerful Russian family which bears his name, would doubtless have remained an obscure soldier had not a trivial incident—a chance, in fact—changed his destiny. After Catherine had deposed her weak husband, and herself assumed the sceptre, she was accustomed to parade the streets of St. Petersburg at the head of her troops. One day Potemkin noticed that her sword bore no knot. He boldly stepped forward, braving the knout for his insubordination, and offered his. The Czarina accepted it, and, struck by the handsome young lieutenant, asked his name and regiment, and if he would not like to serve her in the palace.

A YOUTHFUL FINANCIER.

"Johnnie," said a prominent mine speculator, to his youngest the other day, "I'll give you half-a-crown, if you'll dig up the back garden for your sister's new garden."

"All right," said Johnnie, thoughtfully; "but I shall have to ask for 20 per cent. of the contract price in advance. Not as an evidence of good faith, but for my working capital."

"Work—what do you mean?"

"Well, you see, I shall bury the sixpence somewhere, and tell all the boys in the neighbourhood that a pirate hid some treasure in our yard. When they come on that sixpence they'll make the dirt fly, I can tell you. In that way I can clear about eighty per cent. In fact, I——"

"Well, what?"

"In fact, I don't know but what I can also arrange so as to find that sixpence myself. I'll work it just like that salted mine you were telling mamma about unloading on the Stock Exchange last night."

And the father wept tears of joy, as he thought what a cold day it would be for speculative mortals when that boy grew up.

THE CITY OF GEMS.

Ratnapura, in the island of Ceylon, called "The City of Gems," is the centre of a district twenty or thirty miles square, under almost the whole surface of which a stratum of gravel six feet to twenty feet exists. Throughout this area gem-pits are to be seen near the villages, some being worked now, others abandoned. The natives work there in companies of six or eight, and pay a rupee per man per month for the privilege of working a certain allotment, where they begin by marking off a square of about ten feet.

After removing about three feet of soil, the sounding-rod—a piece of iron about three feet in diameter and six feet long—is used to sound for the gravel. If successful, the digging is begun in earnest till about four feet deep. On the second day gravel is taken out by baskets, handed from one man to another, till all within the square is excavated. Should the miners find the soil fairly firm at the bottom of the pit, they tunnel all round for about two feet, drawing out the gravel and sending it up also to be heaped with the rest, which usually completes the work of the second day, a watchman remaining near it all night.

On the third day it is all washed in wicker baskets by a circular jerking motion, which throws out all the surplus light stones and rubbish, till a good quantity of heavy gravel is left in the bottom, which is carefully examined. There is hardly a basketful that does not contain some gems of inferior value, which are usually sold by the pound for about nine rupees.

Should no valuable stones be found, another pit is sunk, and so on till one, or two, or perhaps three really valuable gems are unearthed, when the work is stopped and the whole party goes off to Ratnapura with the prizes. If these are worth, say, a few thousand rupees, they are kept secret, and only shown to one or two men of money who make the [illegible] look after the safe custody of the precious stones; the finders gamble and drink for some time till another advance becomes necessary, and so on till half the value is obtained.

Then the party, with the mortgagee, proceeds to Colombo, or [illegible], where rich Moorish traders are summoned to purchase, and the gems soon find their way to London. The general public know nothing about these transactions, and valuable gems are never heard of in Ceylon, and scarcely see the light of day till they reach Bond Street. The natives have a great fear of exposing their finds till they are sold, and they have most extraordinary superstitious ideas about showing them.

This system has been in vogue for centuries past. It is only occasionally one hears of any native having enterprise enough to dig a few feet below the first gravel to see if, by sounding, a second bed of gravel is within reach, for they fear the expense of bailing out water, which increases as the greater depth is attained, although the second gravel is well-known to be much richer than the first.

A Yankee has invented a new kind of brace, that contracts on your approach to water; and the moment you come to a puddle it lifts you over and drops you on the other side.

"Mr. Pepperson," said the nurse, sympathetically, "it's a boy, and the doctor says he'll live, but he's deformed, and always will be."

"What's the deformity?" inquired the father of the new infant anxiously.

"He's only got one finger on his right hand, and it's about three times as long as a finger ought to be."

"Is that all?" exclaimed Pepperson, greatly relieved. "There won't be the equal of that boy anywhere for cleaning lamp chimneys."

Uncle Rural (at Metropolitan concert): "I can't make head or tail out o' that tune the fiddlers is playin'."

London Niece (whispering): "It's a symphony."

"It don't seem funny a bit. Who writ it?"

"Beethoven."

"Who's he?"

"A great German composer, uncle."

"Oh! no wonder I can't understand it! But considerin' th' price they charge for tickets, I think they might play it in English!"

What Women Will Do.—Mr. and Mrs. Brown had retired to rest, and had been sleeping for a couple of hours, when Mr. Brown suddenly woke up at dead of night to find his wife just blowing out the candle and lying down afresh.

"What in the world was that noise I just heard?" inquired Mr. B.

Mrs. B. (calmly): "It's all right, dear. The guests of the Guildhall ball are now coming home, and I slipped down and gave our front door a slam, so that the neighbours would think we were there."

The late Charles Dillon used to relate an amusing incident that occurred to him whilst travelling in Australia. He was due in a certain far-away city which boasted two theatres, and each of the managers, it seems, had been in treaty to secure him for the same date. He closed with one, and started on his way. After a long and tedious journey he arrived. The first thing that attracted his attention was a huge, burly man, who, blazing with jewellery, and towering above the passengers, was shouting at the top of his voice:

"Which is Charles Dillon?"

Dillon waited till most of the crowd had dispersed, and then, timidly approaching the glittering giant, said:

"I am."

"Thank goodness!" exclaimed the man; "I was afraid you wouldn't come. I'm manager B."

In an instant Dillon felt himself hurried along as if impelled by some sudden shock, and only recovered when he had been deposited in a magnificently-appointed brougham, with the gorgeous Crummels seated opposite.

"Well, I've got ye! The other manager tried for ye, but I've got ye!"

"No doubt of it," muttered Dillon, moving uneasily.

"Isn't he riled, too! What do you think he's going to do to spite me?"

"I don't know."

"Why, play *The Ticket-of-Leave Man!*"

"Indeed! Is that such a big draw here?"

"Draw be hanged—no! It was arranged between us that the confounded piece should never be done; but he's going to do it now because he knows that I'm an old ticket-of-leave man myself!"

Have you invested SIXPENCE in POPULAR PAPERS yet? If not, why not?

SOMETHING NEW AND STRANGE.

Under this heading we publish brief accounts of new and curious inventions and discoveries. Should any readers have something exceptional of the kind which they would like to communicate to the world at large, we shall be very glad if they will make this the occasion for doing so.

THE hatching of alligators' eggs in an incubator is a new industry in Florida. The demand for the reptiles is in excess of the supply, and half of the little negroes in every village are poking in the sand-banks all day long getting eggs for the artificial hatcheries.

TYPEWRITERS are now so widely used that it is not surprising to find one of special construction for the use of the blind. It is introduced by Messrs. Cockburn & Co., of 2, Princes Mansions, Victoria Street, and has, we believe, received the approval of those unfortunate people for whose benefit it is specially intended.

ELECTRICITY is employed in a Berlin café to boil coffee. A platinum wire passes through several glass jars, the electrical current quickly raising the water contained to boiling point, and the coffee is thus prepared in view of any one in the room. A small electric railway conveys the coffee to several tables, so that the guests may help themselves to their liking.

MR. GEORGE URQUHART, of 6, Derby Street, Mayfair, is the manufacturer of various horseshoe pads, designed to prevent slipping, concussion, corns, sprained tendons, diseased feet, and numberless other complaints, besides contributing to the greater development and activity of the healthy functions of the hoof, as well as greater economy in the wear of horses' legs and hoofs. They are made of indiarubber and leather, and are so arranged that the various requirements are fully complied with. These pads give the hoof a firm hold of any kind of paving, protect the frog, and relieve tender feet from concussion on hard surfaces.

AT a dinner-table recently one of the party produced from his pocket an ingenious contrivance, which he said considerably lessened the miseries of life for moustached men. The little instrument had a steel shank, about three inches long, which fastened by a spring to the handle of his soup-spoon. The other end of the shank supported a silver guard, which lifted his long, heavy moustache and held it out of the way while the contents of the spoon were emptied into his mouth. A touch of the finger on the handle-end of the shank lifted the whole arrangement to an upright position, if he wished, so that the guard was not in the soup at all. When in place it was not connected with the bowl of the spoon, but was held by the shank about an inch from the edge.

THE hammer shop now in process of completion at South Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., will probably be regarded as more remarkable for evidence of power than any mechanical contrivance yet constructed by man. It is here that the plates are to be prepared for the American navy. The hammer is the most marvellous object in the building. It is the invention of Mr. John Fritz, the chief engineer. The entire foundation of the hammer-room is actually laid on what two years ago was the bed of the Lehigh river, which was deflected from its course, and the anvil and hammer rest on piles. Above these a tremendous mass of masonry has been built, and upon that the anvil is super-imposed, consisting of a bed of solid iron, capped by a bed of steel. This anvil represents 1,400 tons of solid metal. Over the anvil springs the colossal frame which supports the hammer. This frame bears a certain resemblance in shape to a truncated Eiffel tower. It springs to a height of ninety feet from a spreading base, whose foundations are clamped deep in the earth, and contains 475 tons of iron. The tap of the hammer is a square solid block of iron faced with steel. It runs in a groove, like the hammer of a pile-driver, is raised by steam, and has a hoist of eighteen feet. It weighs 125 tons. The total weight of iron in this stupendous hammer, frame, and anvil reaches the enormous sum of 2,000 tons. One can, perhaps, more clearly realise what the direct plunge of weight of 125 tons means if he considers that it is equal to the weight of 3,700 men, but having even more impetus, because concentrated in a solid mass of so many cubic feet.

The introduction of this feature has led to the receipt of so many letters from readers who have ideas which they consider worth patenting, that we have decided to make special arrangements of a nature that will enable them to obtain reliable advice on such matters.

If any reader of PEARSON'S WEEKLY *wishes to communicate with an expert regarding an idea for a patent, let him write to the Editor of this paper, marking the envelope* PATENT. *The letter will be handed to a gentleman well known in connection with patents, who will put himself in communication with its sender.*

SOME extraordinary figures in connection with the bottling of Apollinaris water have recently been published. Few would be prepared for the information that no less than 90,000 bottles are filled daily, employing in the operation 450 persons. Last year it is stated that 57 tons of corks and 700 tons of straw envelopes were used.

A CLOCK which will prove of great service to railways has been invented by an American. As a train rushes through a station the hour and minute hands whirl round like a flash to the correct moment, and a red bull's eye flashes into the dial. Five minutes later the red light turns green, and in five minutes more the green light disappears. The driver of the next train can tell exactly to the moment how many minutes ahead is the train that precedes him. The clock is a perfect time-keeper, and when the train passes drops the signal light.

THE cleverest thing of the kind in London just now is at the depôt of the Singer Manufacturing Company, in Oxford Street. Sewing machines grouped are automatically in motion all over the carpeted window space, but the central object of interest is a handsome cabinet. Gradually the lid rises, and simultaneously a Singer sewing machine makes its appearance on a polished rising platform from within and comes to a momentary halt in fixed position at top. It then descends in like fashion, and the lid obediently follows suit. The cabinet facilitates combined treadle and hand action for the machine, which in actual practice is brought into position, or put away by the simple pressure of a button controlling a spring. All that is then seen is an elegantly polished cabinet, with numerous tiny drawers, and its top the height and surface of an ornamental occasional table.

WHAT is known as the New Italian Instantaneous Self-inflating Life Belt—a long name to remember if you want to get the right thing—is now being put to practical test at the Naval Exhibition. It is a flat, compact arrangement, not much larger than a belt, and can be worn without inconvenience at any time, and even slept in. Its utility consists in its becoming automatically inflated so soon as it comes in contact with the water, and it is said to be capable of sustaining afloat the most heavily-clothed person for fifty to sixty hours or more. Gas, to inflate the apparatus, is generated by the contact of two chemical substances kept separate until the required moment for inflation. These substances, which are preferably charged in the liquid state, are any acid of a non-corrosive nature and a carbonate. Citrate, effervescent magnesia, and the like, in contact with pure water, will suffice to generate gas, but the preferable combination is tartaric acid with bi-carbonate of soda. The belt may be thrown to great distances by means of a shell or by rockets, and will carry a line if necessary.

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN.

THE Rev. J. McNeill, the Scots Spurgeon, commenced life as a railway porter.

MR. GLADSTONE says he has only twice in thirty or forty years written anonymously, and that from "altogether exceptional motives."

MR. H. STACY MARKS, R.A., is a man with a peculiar infatuation. He is a most industrious collector of boots and shoes to which any historical association is attached.

MR. ANDREW LANG is tall, spare, and dark, with a fine forehead, dark eyes, and a massive jaw. His hair is thick and is streaked with white. He is very nervous and does not look robust. He speaks with a drawl and has an irritating laugh.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN writes most of his music in the country during the summer. He writes very little in London, where he has a superbly-furnished flat in Victoria Street. He is a night worker, and scarcely ever uses the piano in composing his music.

ONE of the best known and busiest men in the City of London is Colonel Hozier, the energetic and popular secretary of Lloyd's. Although well over fifty, having first seen the light in 1838, "Harry" Hozier, as his more intimate friends call him, is in his luxuriously-furnished office every morning by half-past nine. It is no unusual thing to find him half an hour later puffing a cigar, and dictating to his secretaries two or three letters in different languages almost simultaneously. But very few City magnates have seen half as much of the world as he has. Gazetted a lieutenant in the Royal Artillery as far back as 1857, he took part in the campaign in China a few years later, and was present at the memorable fall of Pekin. Like many another good soldier he has earned the reputation of being a brilliant war correspondent, and in this capacity acted as the special representative of the TIMES during the Austro-Russian war of 1866. As military attaché to the renowned Lord Napier he subsequently took an active part in the Abyssinian War. Lady Blanche Hozier, wife of Colonel Hozier, is as well known in society as her husband is in the City.

MRS. [illegible] ... Hindustanee has been ... [illegible] ... writes it with ease. The ... [illegible] ... "coached" her to such a state of perfection were three natives, with an Englishman, who knows the country and language well, as interpreter.

THE present Duke of Fife has very little of the ideal Scotsman about him, but the last Earl was Scotch of the Scotch. He gave London and London Society a wide berth, living almost his whole life in his Highland home. He enthusiastically cultivated the clan feeling, and to him the proudest day of the year was that on which the Clan Duff congregated at Braemar in all the glory of their Highland regalia. Then he marched, danced, and toasted with them with all the ardour of a real old Highland chieftain. The present Duke has discontinued the time-honoured custom.

THE Duke of Argyle has altered a good deal in appearance of late years, and is having his portrait painted to remind him of how he looked in former days. The artist has had some difficulty about the hair. The Duke's hair was of a peculiar ruddy tint. One of the conditions imposed on the painter was that this adornment should be accurately represented. However, no specimen of the hair has been kept. Under these circumstances it was decided to advertise. Persons with heads of a certain colour were requested to call, and fortunately one among those who responded had hair which satisfied the Duke's severe taste.

PERHAPS the cleverest and most widely-known journalist the provinces ever sent up to London, is Mr. T. Wemyss Reid, the present general manager for Cassell & Co. As a keen, clear, and graphic descriptive writer, he made his mark on the staff of the LEEDS MERCURY, the editorial chair of which he filled up to the date of his acceptance of his present post. He is stoutly built, with a massive, leonine face, and eyes that scintillate with the fire of genius. Pity so able a journalist has been sunk in the business manager—not wholly lost, though, for his pen supplies some of the brightest sketches that appear in the SPEAKER.

IN the park and grounds of the château of Rosa Bonheur are to be found the animals which the artist uses as models. Mdlle. Bonheur has possessed dogs of all kinds. She has kept sheep and goats, also cows from Brittany, Auvergne, Scotland, and of the St. Giron's breed; lions, too, and bears, rare birds, deer, a marmot (bought out of pity from a poor Italian at Nice), gazelles, and an elk. Of all these animals few now remain, except a family of chamois, which occupy the grass-plot lying between the château and the park. One of the chamois has a habit of leaping over the high enclosure which shuts them in, and after being chased round the grounds for several hours by the dogs—doubtless having had enough of such exercise—the agile creature returns to the enclosure with the same ease as it left it. Mdlle. Bonheur's principal recreation consists of drives and walks in the neighbourhood of her château, which is situated between the Seine and the forest, she has a great choice of scenery, which is always charming, though, of course, differing in its special form of beauty according to the season. When Rosa Bonheur goes out walking she is always accompanied by her dogs, which jealously guard her; and sometimes she takes with her a monkey, which is permitted to run about at will. It disports itself by climbing the trees and balancing itself on their branches, or by running after and playing with the dogs, taking care, however, never to stray far from its mistress, on to whose shoulder it occasionally leaps in order to escape a foe or receive a caress.

WHEN Leo XIII. was crowned he decided to insist upon many details of etiquette which Pius XI. had allowed to drift into disuetude. He had two brothers. One was the head of the family, Count Pecci, and the other was a priest, who afterwards wore Cardinal's robes. The Pope sent the priest to bring his aged brother to pay his respects. On the way to the Vatican the old gentleman kept shaking his head and expressing wonder at the fortune that had befallen the family.

"I never thought that Joachim would turn out so well!" he cried. "I never thought my younger brother had it in him. He didn't seem to have enough ability."

"Look here," exclaimed the priest, "you must not go on in that way when you enter the presence of the Holy Father! He is no longer a private person. He is the Pope to you as well as to everybody else. You must kneel and kiss his foot."

"What! kiss my younger brother's foot? Never! He is my younger brother Joachim, and I am proud of him, but I will never kiss his foot. He will never be anything else to me but my younger brother."

By dint of persuasion the Count finally agreed, when he reached the ante-chamber of the reception-room, that he would bend low over the Pope's slipper, and excuse himself from kneeling and kissing it on the ground that his legs were gouty. When the white-haired elder brother murmured this excuse and bowed profoundly, the Pope shrewdly suspected the trick and understood the motive. His Holiness quietly raised his foot to the lips of his astonished relative, and the Count surrendered on the spot and kissed it.

HOW THE RICH LIVE.

NO. VIII.

IN PARLIAMENT.

A NEWLY-ELECTED member of the House of Commons once gave it as his opinion that the place of legislature was undoubtedly the finest club in London, but that it had a serious drawback in demanding an excessively heavy entrance fee.

Both wealth and intellect sigh for the honour of appending the two magical letters, "M.P." to their name, and it would be interesting to know how many of our legislators seek Parliamentary honours because they have a burning desire to benefit their country and how many for the social privileges that representation confers.

The House of Commons naturally offers great attractions to a man of wealth. As a town or county magnate his reputation is limited; as "our member" he may become at once the most influential and the most talked-of man in the district. And what a grand opportunity it offers for one who has acquired wealth by his own industry, and who has a local oratorical reputation, to at once spring into national notoriety! He may be but a brewer or a soap-boiler, but as a Member of Parliament he will be worshipped and glorified.

It is a much easier thing to enter the House now than it was even ten years ago. Then, only men with money to lose could contest constituencies, and the £10,000 which many a man has paid for his seat is a great deal more than a number of members at the present day are worth altogether. Even an uncontested election used to cost between £1,000 and £2,000, and when a man made four or five different attempts before he gained a seat he often paid his entrance fee with a fortune. But a kind government will often reward a man who leads a political forlorn hope with a baronetcy, so that the reward comes surely, even if it comes late.

Political parties are not above holding out baits for services conferred, and it is possible, even in these days of enlightenment, to purchase a Peerage. But they do not go cheaply. A few hundred thousand pounds, when needed by party exigencies, it generally the price of the coveted coronet. And, after all, a seat in the House of Lords carries with it less exacting demands and more added glory than a place in the lower chamber.

There are no constituents to be responsible to for one's every action; there are no lengthy speeches to be made nor dull debates to sit out in order to watch the opportunity of catching the Speaker's eye. Even on great occasions, when the lords spiritual and temporal have to record their votes upon a momentous question, it is possible for a peer to do his work by proxy. The Upper House is a gilded chamber of ease, where "the wealthy curled darlings" of our nation hobnob with her Majesty's favourite Ministers, and the Right Reverend Fathers in God are, perforce, cheek by jowl with the luxurious idler and the libertine.

A different life, however, pervades the House of Commons. Here, indeed, is life, and gaiety, and wisdom, and fashion, and wit. In the midst of all its active serious business, the social side of the House remains a prominent feature. Those who have once or twice visited St. Stephen's, and have, by great favour, been so far honoured as to be provided with a soft seat in the gallery, where they can just see and hear enough to make them long for more, know nothing of the intense charm of being a people's representative. There is not much fun, however, if the member be not rich. One must indeed pity the sorrows of a poor M.P., who has by dint of hard work to earn all he receives, who adjourns to a neighbouring chop-house for his daily meal, and who will wearily trudge along his homeward way, when the night is far spent, that he may save a shilling cab-fare.

The man of wealth, however, provided he be not a serious politician, having paid his entrance fee, takes full advantage of that "temple of luxury and ease" to which he has been elected. He will ride or drive down in the afternoon, coming possibly from the Row, and may, perhaps, bring with him a bevy of fair ladies. If so, he is at liberty to regale them with tea and ices on the terrace of the House, where they can sit and gossip in full view of the muddy malodorous Thames.

Having found the ladies a comfortable seat behind the "gridiron," our member turns to the business of the day.. A dozen letters will have arrived for him from his constituents, on all sorts of subjects, and these he will answer himself. A constituent, be he ever so humble, is worth a vote, and a man likes an autograph letter from his member, written on House of Commons paper. The member knows this well enough, and so, as a matter of business, he dispatches an order for one man, promises to open a bazaar for another, and sends an apology and a guinea for a third.

Then he settles himself comfortably into an armchair in the smoking-room and has a quiet hour with his paper. He does not trouble to enter the House, unless he has secured his seat before prayers, and there are always plenty of indications that a great man is "up" when he joins in the general rush for a place. He will sit on the comfortable bench for an hour, listening patiently to each speaker as he adds his share to the "dreary drip of dilatory declamation." He converses with friends of all shades of political opinion, and, perchance, takes a quiet nap, until the constant tinkling of a bell rouses him to duty and to division.

Now he is brought the card of a belated constituent, who has been patiently waiting for hours in the outer hall, and is praying for a moment's interview. With what pride does the newly-elected member walk down the famous hall, the cynosure of all eyes, the conjectured member of every constituency in the land! At eight o'clock he gets away to dinner, either at his home or with friends, and is back again in a few hours ready to make a night of it if required.

During the season few men receive such a number of invitations as the wealthy M.P. Here are cards for dinners, political, social, and select, for exhibitions, shows, festivities, and all sorts of miscellaneous functions, which fill his diary to overflowing.

Most wealthy society men, when they enter the House of Commons, are already possessed of a London house, and to them political life generally means an additional £5,000 a year in expenses. If, however, an M.P. has to find himself a house or chambers for the season, these may take the form of a neat ten-room house in Mayfair or a suite of chambers in Victoria Street. This means to him a rental, with service, of from £600 to £1,000 a year. How he further spends his money has already been detailed in previous articles. Suffice it to say, that in no assembly in the world are to be found such handsome, well-dressed, well-set-up men as those who, in both Houses of the Legislature, compose "the finest aristocracy in the world."

This series has included articles on—No. 1. BOYHOOD AND SCHOOL LIFE. No. 2. LIFE AT THE VARSITY. No. 3. KEEPING UP A COUNTRY ESTABLISHMENT. No. 4. SOCIETY IN THE SEASON. No. 5. MEN AND THEIR SHOPPING. No. 6. SPORTS AND PASTIMES. No. 7. THE LADIES!

MANLEY: "I wish young Gibbon could break himself of that silly habit of sucking the knob of his stick."

Carper: "Why? It's impossible for him to dig it in anybody's eye while he is doing that."

A SENTIMENTAL beggar closed his written appeal for a pair of cast-off trousers with these touching words: "So send me, most honoured sir, the trousers, and they will be woven into the laurel crown of your good deeds in heaven."

MECHANICAL dolls are made that cry very naturally. One was purchased by a Bolton mother, and hidden in a drawer to await a chance for a birthday surprise. At midnight the spring got loose, and the result was that the father had arisen, lighted the gas-stove, and prepared the feeding-bottle before he discovered that it was a false alarm.

JUSTIFIED GRIEF.—A kind-hearted lady found a youngster crying against a wall yesterday.

"What's the matter, my boy?" she asked, and the boy answered:

"How would you like to wear your long-legged brother's trousers cut down so that the bag of the knees came at your ankle?"

TRAMP: "Dear sir, unless I get a bite of something at once I shall soon be dead."

Paterfamilias: "Poor man, you are homeless, are you?"

Tramp: "Oh, no; heaven is my home."

Paterfamilias: "Here is twopence for some bread; and—er—try to reach home as soon as possible."

THERE lived in Bedford an old croaker who seemed pleased at every calamity, as a premonition of impending rain. His name was Stewart, and he kept the good people of his town in an extremely nervous condition by prophesying the end of the world. One day an unbeliever asked of Mrs. Stewart, the prophet's wife, if she really believed the world was coming to an end on the date he had named.

"Well, I don't know," she replied, "but I do hope so for it will do Mr. Stewart so much good."

MRS. FIGG: "You little wretch, you have been fighting again! I know you have! What was it all about?"

Tommy: "It was this way. You see, Jimmy Brown and me, we put in our pennies together to buy apples, and I was to have the cores of what was bought in the morning, and he was to have the cores of what was bought in the afternoon."

Mrs. Figg: "I do not see any unfairness about that."

Tommy: "Yes; but in the afternoon he went and bought bananas."

NOT "PIZEN."

A GENTLEMAN who travelled in Western America some years ago says that to this day he has a "creeping sensation" when he recalls his experience in spending the night at a farmhouse. It was late in the summer, and the farmer were doing their chores while their wives were completing their household duties and rolling them with their arms. Just before dark the traveller reached a secluded farmhouse, and was given a hearty welcome and invited into the house where he asked if he might stay all night. After making his request he heard the farmer's wife say to her husband and son:

"The strangers room from the spare room bed will have to be filled. I emptied it to-day and forgot all about it until this minute."

When the tired guest was shown to his room, he undressed hastily and climbed into bed. Every movement of his body caused the straw to rustle under him, and pretty soon he discovered that it rustled even when he was lying perfectly still. He was of a nervous temperament, and the strange noise disturbed him. It was only occasional. He would be still for a moment, and then the straw would rustle loudly. It might be a rat! He sat up in bed, lighted his candle, and looked at the mattress. All was still now.

"I expect it's nothing but grasshoppers and crickets," he said. "I'm not going to be cheated out of my rest by some harmless insects."

He got back into bed; but remained restless nights, thinking the rustling sounds frequently. The next morning he shifted his bed.

"I beg your pardon, but I think that a mouse or some small animal was in the straw you put into the mattress on my bed last night. I heard and felt something rustling constantly."

"We must see about it," said the man. "Henry, you pitch the mattress out on the grass and empty out the straw. Like as not some of them playsey kittens got into it. It was so dark we couldn't have seen it if it had been a hog."

A few minutes later Henry appeared at the open window with a black snake, fully four feet long, dangling from the end of a stick.

"There you air," he said, laconically. "That's all it was. He was terrible mad, and came at me the minute I let him out. But I trampled the life out of him in no time."

"And I slept all night with that thing in my bed!" gasped the stranger, shuddering from head to foot.

"Chucks!" said the farmer. "He wouldn't a hurt you none if he had bit you. Them kind of snakes aren't pizen."

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Either a complete copy of the current number of PEARSON'S WEEKLY, or this notice, must be upon the person of the deceased at the time of the accident. The blank line in the notice of this notice must contain the usual signature of the deceased written either in ink or pencil. Death must occur within twenty-four hours of the accident, and application for payment of the Insurance Money must be made to the Proprietors of this Paper within seven days of the occurrence. This offer is not intended to include persons under 15 years of age. Five hundred pounds of the above sum will be paid by the

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Secretary of the Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation, Limited.

Available until midnight, May 25th, 1891.

HUNTING THE HUNTER.

THEY tell a story in British Columbia of a Boston millionaire who was very desirous of playing the Nimrod to the extent of confronting and shooting a full-grown grizzly bear. He had hunted unsuccessfully through the Sierra Nevadas in California, as well as among the mountains of Washington Territory, and at length came, by way of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to Glacier, in the heart of the Selkirk Mountains. It is a very wild country thereabouts, reported to contain bears without number. Here, accompanied by a trusty fellow-sportsman, our millionaire hunted for five or six days, but still without success; he did not so much as see a bear track.

Disheartened, and not a little out of conceit with the country and all his advisers, he came back to the little hotel at about noon on the sixth day, and declared that he was done with the foolish business; and in earnest of this resolve he threw his rifle behind the door of his room. If it had been a "train day" at Glacier, he would have departed at once. But he was forced to tarry, and after supper went out for a walk along the railway, disdaining to bother with a rifle. Rather less than a mile from the station the line is protected by a snowshed along the base of a mountain.

The snowsheds of the Canadian Pacific Railway are enormously strong structures, built to resist avalanches from the sides of the mountains. In many places they are nearly flat on the top, and offer a fine surface for a promenade. Our friend had climbed to the roof of this shed, and, as he walked leisurely along, was enjoying a cigar and the beautiful view down the valley of the Illicillewaet, when up from a hole in the shed-roof, where the trainmen had ripped off a couple of planks to allow the smoke of the trains to get out, a bear suddenly thrust his head, with the evident intention of climbing out. It did not seem to be a large head, and our friend, too hastily concluding that it belonged to a small bear, snatched up a piece of board, and aimed several strokes at the animal.

The bear struggled up through the hole in spite of the blows, and immediately exhibited a body out of all proportion to the size of its head. So big was it, indeed, that our sportsman thought his best course was to beat a retreat. It turned out, moreover, that a very rapid retreat was necessary, for the bear chased him at full speed back along the shed, and so closely that on coming to the end of the shed he was compelled to jump off—a distance of fifteen feet—to the ground below.

A good deal shaken up, he regained his footing and ran into the shed, along the track, thinking to get out of sight there. But the bear, which had slid down backward at the corner of the shed, still followed him. He was obliged to run at his best pace again. The shed was dark, but he saw light ahead, at the hole where the bear had climbed out. He made for the place, and, in turn, tried his hand at climbing. Necessity spurred him on, and he was able to get up the timbers and crawl out at the hole in advance of his grey-tipped adversary. The two removed planks lay beside the hole, and our hotly-pursued hero lost no time in dragging them over it, thus preventing the grizzly from coming up after him.

Very hot, and somewhat alarmed, he now began shouting for assistance, and three trackmen presently came from their camp to learn the cause of the outcry. At their approach the bear moved leisurely off along the shed and disappeared in a swamp near the farther end of it. Thankful for his rescue, the Bostonian handed the trackmen five shillings a piece, and is reported to have indulged in sundry luminous remarks as to the uncertainties of bear-hunting. He had been tramping for a week, loaded down with cartridges and rifles, without seeing a trace of a bear. But before he was ten minutes away from the hotel, *unarmed*, a grizzly found him.

Cyclists must have their lamps alight at 8.46 p.m. on Monday May 18th, and about two minutes later for every succeeding evening during the week.

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Signature ________________________

Available until midnight, May 25th, 1891.

THE LOST TREASURE OF KING DARIUS.

EVERY Persian hopes that one day he may light upon a buried treasure. In a country where there are no banks, where the word *sroff*, which we translate "banker," really means money-changer and usurer, and where the *sroffs* themselves, though sometimes rich, are merely petty tradesmen—in a country where the possession of wealth makes its holder the mark for oppression, and where house or landed property is usually an exceedingly bad investment—the only course for the capitalist is to buy jewels or to bury his cash.

The buying of jewels has two disadvantages; the buyer will almost certainly lose by the transaction, and the fact of his being a buyer is likely to become known to his decided disadvantage. The peasantry of Persia, though well-clad as a rule, are careful to keep up an appearance of poverty. Personal ornaments are never worn by them, and rarely by their womankind. The villager, and the townsman too, habitually buries his money.

And since this has been the custom for ages, it is not to be wondered at that treasure-trove is a common thing. There are men who pass their lives in seeking for it, and some of them have made, not one find, but several. A villager, not long ago, found a heap of coins in the ruins of a mud-village near Ispahan. Such is the tenacity of the Ispahan mud that vast edifices, entirely constructed of sun-dried bricks, remain in good condition after four or five hundred years. But then Central Persia is the driest country in the world; a knife-blade may be left exposed to the air for a whole year there without tarnishing.

One lucky villager was at work all alone, when a stroke of his pickaxe disclosed a square cavity in the ruined wall which he was breaking down. In that cavity were two jars, their openings sealed with plaster of Paris. The villager tried in vain to remove one of the jars, but was not able to remove the lid. So he struck the jar with his pick, when out flew a golden stream. Donkey-load by donkey-load the lucky man removed the treasure. Fortunately for him he did so unobserved. He then announced his immediate departure as a pilgrim on foot to Mecca, which accounted satisfactorily for a disappearance of two years. During this period the whole amount was safely placed. The man started on his pilgrimage a ragged villager; he returned a wealthy hadji. Of course, he was accused of being a treasure-finder, but there was no proof; and do not many hadjis make money during their pilgrimages?

Every Persian thinks and dreams of "The Treasure of King Darius." The belief that King Darius did bury an enormous treasure is sustained by many Persian historians and poets. One thing is quite certain—if any such treasure was concealed, it has never been found. Yet there have been suspicions of its discovery.

Eight years ago the Governor of Zinjan found out that a peasant named Yari was in the habit of selling ingots of gold to the Jews at much less than the market value. Accordingly, the governor seized Yari, and, on searching his house, found a considerable quantity of gold in ingots. This was done quietly, but the matter got wind; and then the governor reported to the Shah that Yari had found a gold mine, or the treasure of King Darius, or else the way to make gold.

On this report Yari was hurried to the capital; but there he denied all knowledge of the treasure of King Darius or of any gold mine. Nor would he admit that he was a successful alchemist; the truth was that he had found a few ingots, and had sold them one by one. But, unfortunately for Yari, apparatus for fusing metal was found in his house. This disposed of the story of the finding of ingots; clearly, they had been made on Yari's premises.

The result was that he was clapped into prison, where he remained for a long time; until, after repeated applications of the bastinado he confessed that he had discovered a gold-mine. The Shah and his ministers were delighted. Released from prison, the peasant received a dress of honour and the title of Khan.

With every consideration, but under a strong guard, he was now taken back to Zinjan, that he might point out his mine. This was necessary, because his directions for its discovery, though full of detail, had not enabled the authorities to find it out. But now what happened? On arriving at Zinjan, Yari Khan became very ill indeed—so ill that he declined to leave his house. But the local authorities were impatient to get at the gold-mine, and Yari Khan was dragged to the mountains where he had said that he had found it. But he either could not or would not point it out. Again the bastinado was resorted to; once more Yari was thrown into prison, and no more is known of him.

A very learned poor man, a religious enthusiast—a man who, in fact, has invented a new religion—was unlucky enough, some twelve years ago, while rebuilding his house, to discover five jars full of coin. He buried his find immediately. The freeholder, a wealthy proprietor, got wind of the affair, and sent a messenger to demand the whole of the treasure-trove. The religious enthusiast tried to make terms, and even attempted to bribe the envoy; but, unfortunately, all he could offer was a share of the actual coin itself. This the retainer was afraid to accept, as the coins were ancient ones, and his possession of them might betray him.

Then a written order was produced, commanding the unhappy finder to proceed to Shiraz. The contents of one jar went with him, the other four vessels being placed in the hands of two friends of the great man. Of course, all five jars ultimately went to the grandee. Nothing was left to the unlucky finder, save the suspicion of having discovered and secreted other and untold wealth—in fact, the treasure of King Darius. From that time he went about in fear of his life, left the province, and ultimately sought shelter at the British Residency at Bushire.

It is one of the regular occupations of the inhabitants of Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, to dig for treasure. A few shillings is paid for permission to dig. The ground is turned up, broken, and sifted, the speculator watching his diggers. Coins, ornaments made of the precious metals, and engraved gems, are not unfrequently discovered; and the business is said to pay.

Ancient coins are plentiful in Persia, those of Alexander the Great being common. Sassanian coins—on the reverse of which are always seen figures and a fire-altar, in those days they worshipped fire in Persia—are so common as to be worth no more than the silver they are made of. These coins are often found in jars, buried in ancient ruins or in the earth.

The excavations made by Persians at Persepolis, at the tomb of Cyrus, at Ecbatana, and at Susa, are made solely in search of buried treasure—the phantom treasure of King Darius. At Rhé, near Teheran, the ancient Rhages, an old man has pottered about all his life looking for treasure.

Wherever there are ancient ruins, and they abound in Persia, there you will find similar enthusiasts, men who spend their whole lives in the search, and not always without result. Perhaps the treasure of Darius really does exist: perhaps it will some day be found. If so, it will assuredly be melted down, and we Europeans shall be none the wiser.

MECHANIC (catching a pickpocket rifling his pockets): "What are you doing there?"

Pickpocket: "Raising your wages, that's all."

"I WANT to see the head of the firm," said the commercial traveller, as he began unpacking his combs.

"It's a bald one," the assistant told him; and he sorrowfully departed.

HIS ONLY BENT.—Editor (to applicant for position): "But what can you do, young man? Haven't you some special talent or taste—some bent, as they say?"

Applicant (dubiously): "N-no, not that I can think of—except that I am a little bow-legged."

ANGRY FATHER-IN-LAW: "Didn't you tell me when you married my daughter that you were worth £40,000?"

Lazy Son-in-Law: "No, sir. I said that I could lay my hand on £40,000, but had I done so I should now be in jail."

"YOU'RE looking up lately, Spriggins. Have you found a job?"

"Oh, yes—a first-rate one. I'm an interrupter."

"What's that?"

"Well, I shout out questions when politicians are making their speeches; and as they supply the queries, and have the answers all cut and dried, they bring down the house by their ready wit in replying. See?"

AT a recent card party at the house of a popular London dentist, the counters used were false teeth. At first the ladies present seemed very sensitive about touching the little white heaps, but, as the evening wore on, the more false teeth each fair dame possessed the happier she seemed. When the counters were totalled up at the end of the game, there were only thirteen more than had been originally given out! They were worth a shilling apiece.

THEY were a nice practical couple; they were not rich, but they were, as we say, practical, and so, after only a couple of days away, and while the honeymoon was still as bright as an electric light, there they were, installed in a nice little house and settled down ever so cosily. Her mamma had been invited to dinner, and they had got as far as the pudding.

Mamma: "What a nice pudding, Milly, and what fine rice; where did you get it?"

Milly (blushing, but brave): "Oh, it was what they threw after us at the wedding; there was quite half a pint down Harry's back. Do you know where the other satin shoe is, ma, that they threw after us? They just fit me."

FACTS.

THE highest trees have most pointed leaves.

OVER 10,000 Irish people settle in England every year.

IN the United Kingdom there is a free library for each 277,000 of the inhabitants.

BLACK ice cream is to be the newest Transatlantic dainty this summer. The cream is tinted with the juice of Turkish prunes, and looks more novel than appetising.

ONE of the most striking figures in the palace at Gatschina is the great Danish hound, which is the Czar's favourite dog. This dog is said to be the largest of his species in the world, and is the Czar's constant companion.

THE increase of the French population is becoming smaller and smaller every year. Of late years this increase has only been about 50,000 or 55,000 annually, as against 500,000 in round numbers in Germany and Great Britain, and 1,250,000 in Russia.

As affording some idea of the amount of light gold now in circulation, it is stated that recently a financier in the City accepted £1,000 largely made up of half-sovereigns, and that, on the amount being weighed at his banker's, it was found to be short by £19.

THE mechanical power of the blow from the tail of a large Greenland whale has been found to be equivalent to 146 horse-power. The width of the tail between the tips of the flanges is about twenty feet. A whale can move through the water at the rate of eight or nine knots an hour.

IT surely was never predicted that our canine pets would come to be decked out in collars and neckties, yet this is an actual fact. The Berlin saddlers are now offering these novelties for sale as a substitute for the old-fashioned dog-collar. The collar itself is made of snow-white patent leather; the "tie," which is attached to it, is also of leather, stained in the colours most in vogue.

THE OIL INDUSTRY.—From the time the first well was drilled in America, in 1859, to the present year, the value of the oil exported by the States is estimated to have reached the enormous figure of £200,000,000. Russia and Turkey are deriving great profits from the industry. Batoum, a miserable Turkish town, has developed in a few years into a powerful and prosperous mercantile community, exporting to India alone last year 17,000,000 gallons of petroleum, of which a million gallons went to Burmah.

MILE RECORDS.—The fastest mile on record for a railway train is 40½ secs.; that for a horse, 1 min. 25 secs. The record made for bicycles is 2 min. 29 4-5th secs. Skates as a means of progression take the next place to the horse, the skate record for the mile being 2 min. 12 3-5th secs. The fastest on record for runners is 4 min. 12¾ secs., and for pedestrians 6 min. 23 secs. The best time over the mile made by a swimmer is 26 min. 52 secs. It is difficult to be up to date in these matters, and fractions of a second are always suspicious, or at any rate open to question; still, at the present time, the above records may be taken as fairly reliable.

THE WORTH OF EARTH WORMS.—Darwin estimated that worms, by swallowing earth for the sake of the vegetable matter it contains, and forming castings, bring to the earth as much as ten tons of earth per annum on an acre. Worms are great promoters of vegetation by boring, perforating, and loosening the soil, and rendering it pervious to rains and the fibres of plants, by drawing straws and stalks of leaves and twigs into it, and most of all, by throwing such infinite numbers of lumps of earth called worm casts, which form a fine manure for grain and grass. The earth, without these worms, would soon become cold, hard-bound, void of fermentation, and consequently sterile. This has occurred in many places where the worms have been either accidentally or intentionally destroyed, and the fertility of the soil thus lost has only been restored when the worms have been collected again and have resumed their fertilising work.

THE TROUBLES OF A ZULU BABY.—When a Zulu child is first born it is of a light hue and does not get the darker tint of the parents for some years. As soon as it enters the world the "medicine man" is sent for. Contrary to the custom of the civilised "medicine man," he takes no notice whatever of the mother, but, devoting himself entirely to the child, makes a number of small gashes in various parts of the poor infant's body, into which he rubs medicine and goes on his way rejoicing, returning next day to make the incisions deeper and rub more medicine into them. This second operation being performed, the child is washed and dried by being moved about in the smoke of a wood fire, eventually being daubed all over with a red paint, which is renewed as fast as it wears off for a period of several months. The child is not allowed any natural food until the visits of the "medicine man" are ended (this formality often causing serious consequences to the offspring), and a few days afterwards the mother will be seen about her work as usual with the little one strapped to her back.

A SEASIDE hotel near New York has 1,200 rooms.

NEW YORK, Paris, and Berlin altogether have not so large an area as London.

THE coins of Siam are made of porcelain, and those of Japan are composed principally of iron.

NEVER, surely, was there such a box of machinery as the torpedo depôt ship *Vulcan*. In all—reckoning those of the various torpedo-boats and small craft which she carries—she contains ninety-three engines.

IF "cleanliness is next to godliness," the Japanese ought to rank very high in the moral scale, for there is no people so generally given to bathing. The number of bath-houses in Tokio is 1,200, and the average daily attendance at each is 700.

A NEW Imperial throne is to be erected in the White Hall of the Palace in Berlin. The throne is fashioned after a design drawn by Professor Doepher, the back being composed of gold silk brocade, upon which is embroidered the Prussian eagle in black.

THE census gives a curious result for a little village in the south of France called Beauset. The number of inhabitants is returned as exactly 200, of whom 100 belong to the masculine sex, and, consequently, 100 to the feminine. Forty-four of each sex are unmarried, and forty-nine are married. There are seven widows and seven widowers.

A CURIOUS REVENGE.—When the Prime Minister of the Chinese Emperor has a grudge against one of the nobles, he advises his royal master to pay him a prolonged visit. This visit generally means ruin, for the Emperor travels with a retinue of ten thousand persons. A week's visit is likely to drain the host's banking account, and drive him to the verge of lunacy.

THE THREE UNHEALTHIEST CAPITALS IN EUROPE.—These are St. Petersburg, Budapesth, and Madrid. But the authorities of the latter city are now determined upon sanitary reform. A series of measures have just been decided upon, whereby sewers are to be constructed, cloths and rags disinfected, food stuffs inspected, hospitals organised, streets watered, etc. It is not before time, because from 1880 to 1887, the Madrid death-rate was 41·2 per 1,000. Since that time it has risen to 45.

BIG LIGHTS.—The largest chandelier in the United Kingdom is said to be that of Drury Lane Theatre, twenty-seven feet in circumference at the base, with six tiers one above the other; it would hold 2,000 candles if necessary, and contains 20,000 cut crystal drops. The largest gaselier in the world is at the Boston Theatre; it has 15,000 glass prisms and 380 gas-burners. Another big chandelier is that at Welbeck Abbey, one of the residences of the Duke of Portland. In the splendid underground ballroom illumination is obtained by day from twenty-seven octagonal lights, and at night from a number of crystal chandeliers, each weighing a ton. The room, which covers a rood of ground, has been dug out of the solid clay. It is used also as a picture gallery, and on the walls are 160 grand works by Raffaelle, Vandyck, Rembrandt, Rubens, Holbein, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and others.

DUTCH SMOKERS.—The Hollanders are perhaps of all the Northern peoples those who smoke the most. The humidity of their climate makes it almost a necessity, and the moderate cost of tobacco with them renders it accessible to all. To show how deeply rooted is the habit, it is enough to say that the boatmen of the *trekschuit*, the aquatic *diligence* of Holland, measure distances by smoking. From here, they say, to such-and-such a place, it is not so many miles, but so many pipes. When you enter a house, after the first salutations, your host offers you a cigar; when you take leave, he hands you another, and often insists upon filling your cigar-case. In the streets you see persons lighting a fresh cigar with the burning stump of the last one, without pausing in their walk, and with the busy air of people who do not wish to lose a moment of time or a mouthful of smoke. Many go to sleep with pipe in mouth, relight it if they wake in the night, and again in the morning before they step out of bed.

FORTUNES SPENT IN LACES.—American ladies are very fond of lace. There are fortunes in laces in New York. Those belonging to the several Vanderbilts must be worth nearly £100,000, and rival the Prussian and Austrian crown laces. The Astor family has rich lace treasures, which connoisseurs value at not less than £60,000. The late Mrs. Astor left from £8,000 to £10,000 worth to the Metropolitan Art Museum. The late Mrs. A. T. Stewart knew more about laces than she did about most subjects, and spent £100 per pair for the curtains at her big, gloomy mansion's windows. Her personal and dress laces were worth £50,000. Mrs. R. L. Stewart has a collection equally valuable. New York buys more laces than any other city in the world. It has at least a score of wealthy women whose laces exceed £10,000 in value, and probably a hundred whose collections would sell for £4,000. The lace cloaks that have lately come in fashion figure in the wardrobes of affluent matrons to the tune of from £200 to £2,000. The late Mrs. John Jacob Astor had a famous lace robe that cost £3,500 in Paris, but that is quite outdone by a lace dress lately heard of which was bought for £5,000.

IN the Dominion of Canada alone 954,000 square miles are yet unexplored.

THE thinnest, and at the same time one of the toughest, leathers tanned is a frog's skin.

LAST year the male staff of the Post Office Savings Bank worked overtime to the extent of 268,000 hours. This overtime would represent the labour at ordinary hours of an additional staff of 129 clerks.

PAPER that is absolutely waterproof has just been invented by a Parisian chemist. The process can be carried out after the paper is made, or during the operation of making it. Paper thus treated will be very valuable for packing.

RUBBER VELVET.—A new material called rubber velvet is made by sprinkling powdered felt of any colour over cloth while the latter is hot and soft. The result looks like felt-cloth, but is elastic, waterproof, and exceedingly light.

A LOG FOR A HOUSE.—There is a negro in America whose home is a huge log. This log is twenty feet long and five feet in diameter. It is divided into three apartments, one of which is occupied by the proprietor's three hogs, the negro occupies another, and the third is filled with hunting and fishing apparatus.

A TROUPE now engaged at an American theatre actually consists of three generations—viz., grandmother, mother, and daughter. The grandmother is slightly under fifty, [illegible] with a face looking quite young, with the aid of a few cosmetics. The mother is thirty, and the daughter fourteen. They appear in the playbill as sisters, and anyone would take them to be, for not only are they alike in activity, but resemble each other in size and shape.

THE ONLY AIR-FEEDING BIRD.—Swallows take their food from the air, and they drink when flying. This, so far as is known to naturalists, cannot be said of any other bird. Various species of gnats and ephemera constitute the food of swallows upon their arrival in this country; but, as summer advances, winged beetles are also greedily taken. So rapidly does the bird capture those that, after it has been on the wing but a few moments, it has accumulated sufficient to form a pellet as large as an ordinary rifle-bullet.

THE EEL'S TENACITY OF LIFE.—M. Desmarest, a French naturalist, has given an interesting account of an eel which lived in his family for forty years. Its life during that period was encompassed by many unfavourable circumstances. It was kept in an earthenware jar in which it had to lie coiled up, the water being changed twice weekly. It was fed with small pieces of meat, but only in the summer. On two occasions in winter it was completely frozen up. It seemed to know its keepers, and raised its head slightly up out of the water if it wanted food or if it was called. After having lived in this way for forty years it managed during very hot weather to escape, but only to its death, as the extremely hot sun soon rendered its gills or breathing organs dry and utterly useless for respiration.

ABOUT DREAMS.—Dr. Julius Nelson, of New York, has noted 4,000 of his dreams, and finds that evening and nocturnal dreams are connected with the events of the day, but the latter have more of the terrifying element. The pleasantest and most remarkable dreams are those of the morning, after the rest of the brain. Fancy is then at her best, and gives the clearest visions. In this connection it will be remembered that many famous men have thought over their imaginative problems in the early morning. The vividness of Dr. Nelson's dreams is subject to regular fluctuations of twenty-eight days, and varies with the seasons. They are most vivid in December, and dullest in March and April. A popular superstition attaches most importance to dreams in the twelve nights from Christmas to January the 6th, and Dr. Nelson thinks his experience may explain this.

THE HOUSE-SPIDER'S WEB.—While the garden spiders are noted for the perfection of their weaving, those which invade our dwellings are no less remarkable for the astute intelligence which they display in the construction of their webs. These latter, usually erected in the corners of the house, especially in those triangular spaces formed by the meeting of the roof and the walls, exhibit a horizontal, or slightly inclined, net, forming a kind of stout foundation or basement floor, but yet the most conspicuous part of the whole structure. Above this basement portion, that is always seen to be soiled with dust, etc., comes the upper storey, consisting of irregularly-crossed threads, in which the unwary prey gets entangled and lost. The most ingenious part of the whole edifice is a kind of circular tunnel with a double outlet, in which the spider sits ensconced while waiting for his victim. One outlet of this den is horizontal, and upon the upper web, and the other is vertical and gives passage below to the basement. It is from the former that the spider rushes upon his prey, and Pouchet says that the latter is used for getting rid of the bodily remains of the insect from which the blood has been sucked, and which would otherwise accumulate on the upper web, to the undesired alarm of the next living prey.

FICTION.

A Patent Chaperone.—Select society circles will be pleasantly agitated to learn that, after anxious years of study and experiment, the celebrated scientist and inventor, Professor Dinglhoeffer, has perfected his patent rubber chaperone. His object has been to produce an imitation of the present inevitable and disagreeable chaperone of commerce that will bear inspection by Mrs. Grundy, and at the same time meet the views of the chaperoned parties as to discretion and obliviousness.

The Dinglhoeffer invention is a hollow rubber structure representing an antique maiden lady or matron of severe facial aspect. The entire figure can be inflated at will, and be readily packed in a small box for shipment to families, or carried about to watering-places in the bottom of a trunk.

A singularly life-like expression is imparted by imitation gold-stopped teeth and glass eyes of a yellowish tinge, the latter being rolled at two-minute intervals, and closing every fifteen minutes for a five-minute nap, by clockwork concealed in the figure's head. The same ingenious machinery causes the corrugated rubber brow to frown at four-minute intervals for four hours without re-winding.

The feet are provided with castors on the roller-skate principle, and the inventor claims that, when his invention is placed on end, with its right arm crooked through that of the escort for the occasion, it glides over the pavement, or down a ball-room, in a noiseless and lifelike manner calculated to deceive the eye of the most malignant gossip. The extreme compressibility of the patent chaperone renders it of the greatest convenience at receptions and in crowded theatres. It can be wedged between a spooney couple in a single-seat brougham without inconvenience, and the professor lays special stress upon its merits as a life-preserver, while engaged in chaperoning at the seaside. Should anyone be seized with cramp, the chaperone can be at once thrown into the surf, and there you are.

In addition to its principal charm of absolute discretion, this patent chaperone is, of course, devoid of the terrific after-theatre appetite peculiar to the regular article, an important item with the small-salaried lover of the period.

The Real Origin of Flies.—Flies are artificially propagated in South London, where a company has invested capital, and is running the works to their full capacity. Flies are incubated from eggs by an artificial hatching arrangement, and the young flies are taught all they know in the factory.

Some will look upon this statement as false, and wonder why any association of men should engage in this artificial propagation of the fly. We will explain. It is well known that flies die at the end of the season, and if it were not for artificial propagation there would be none the next season.

The parties that are engaged in this industry are also manufacturers of fly-papers and fly-traps. We trust that their object is now plain. In order to sell their papers and traps it is necessary to have game to catch. These gentlemen had engaged largely in the manufacture of fly-papers and fly-traps before they knew that flies only lasted one season, and after a year of success they found bankruptcy staring them in the face, as it was probable they would not sell a sheet of fly-paper the next year. So they organised the "Great Artificial Fly Incubating Association," and issued a hundred thousand pounds' worth of stock.

We have no room to describe the hatching of flies, but it is done like hatching chickens by steam. Some of the best old flies are kept to lay eggs, and the eggs are placed on cards and put into an oven. They hatch out in twenty minutes, and are ready in half an hour to learn the business. First they are taught to wade in butter, to swim in cream, and to get into things about the kitchen.

Then the young flies are taken to a dormitory, where men and women, engaged for the purpose, are pretending to sleep. An old fly and a hundred young ones are placed by each bed, and the old fly begins to have his fun with the sleeper. The old fly, after seating the young flies on cuffs and collars, calls "Attention!" and, after buzzing about a little, lights on the sleeper's nose. The sleeper pretends to be angry, and slaps at the fly; but this is a mere matter of form, however, for if a sleeper engaged by the Association kills an old fly, it is deducted from his or her salary.

As the old fly gets away, the young flies laugh and want to try it themselves. This is very trying to the alleged sleepers, causing nervousness and a twitching of the muscles, but they must not injure the fly. The little flies notice everything, and, after the old fly has caroused and tickled and buzzed, then the young flies are allowed to practice. The person practised on gets six shillings a day and board, as it is a very particular and trying situation.

Then comes the expensive business of distributing flies throughout the country. Formerly it was done through canvassers and pedlars, but that was found too expensive; so the Association originated the idea of sending out regular agents, called tramps, to introduce the flies.

The first year only about 10,000 tramps were sent out, but the business has grown to such huge proportions that it is estimated that this year the Association is sending out 100,000 tramps, leaving flies. They go from house to house begging, and before they leave they manage to drop a few flies. Each tramp has a card with a million young flies on it. While the woman of the house is looking for a dog to drive him away, he slips his hand up his sleeve and tears off a piece of card, containing perhaps 10,000 young flies, and drops it in some convenient place. This is enough to start on, as the flies breed rapidly. The next day the woman will wonder "where on earth all those flies came from."

The Association has distributing points all over the country where the tramps go once a month after a new supply. A card will last a tramp thirty days. The introduction of the fly-paper and the fly-trap is easier, as these articles are sent direct to tradesmen, who sell them to consumers. Stock in the Association is worth an immense amount, paying a quarterly dividend of twenty per cent. The only way that the fly nuisance can be abated is to kill the tramps as fast as they enter the community. We have exposed the nefarious business; now let the people rise up and crush it out of existence.

A Long Wait.

At exactly fifteen minutes to eight
His step was heard at the garden gate.

And then, with heart that was light and gay,
He laughed to himself in a jubilant way;

And rang the bell for the maiden trim
Who'd promised to go to the play with him;

And told the servant, with joyous air,
To say there were fifteen minutes to spare.

And then for fifteen minutes he sat
In the parlour dim, and held his hat,

And waited and sighed for the maiden trim
Who'd promised to go to the play with him.

Until, as the clock overhead struck eight,
He muttered: "Great Scott! it is getting late!"

And took a turn on the parlour floor,
And waited for fifteen minutes more;

And grunted loud in a dubious way,
And thought of those seats in the front parquet;
And midnight came, and the break of day.

That day, and the next, and the next one too,
He sat and waited the long hours through.

Then time flew on, and the years sped by,
And still he sat with expectant eye

And lengthened beard, for the maiden trim
Who'd promised to go to the play with him;

Until one night, as with palsied hand
He sat in the chair, for he couldn't stand,

And drummed in an aimless way, she came
And entered the room with her withered frame.

The moon's bright rays touched the silvered hair
Of her who had fifteen minutes to spare.

And then in tones that he strained to hear,
She spoke, and she said, "Are you ready, dear?"

The lady barber (to husband, whose throat she was in the act of shaving): "And you will give me that new bonnet, won't you, John?"

A Wild West Wedding.—"If any here present," said the officiating clergyman, "can show just cause why this man and this woman may not lawfully be joined together let him now speak, or for ever hold his peace."

The groom, Mr. Lariat, of Arizona, casually laid a pair of large revolvers on the railing in front of him, and the ceremony proceeded.

Patient Man: "Suppose a woman makes it so hot for her husband that he can't live with her, and he leaves her, what can she do?"

Lawyer: "Sue him for support."

"Suppose she has run him so heavily into debt that he can't support her, because his creditors grab every penny as quick as he gets it?"

"If for any reason he fails to pay her the amount ordered he will be sent to gaol for contempt of court."

"Suppose she drives him out of the house with a flat-iron, and he's afraid to go back?"

"She can sue him for desertion."

"Well, I don't see anything for me to do but go and hang myself."

"It's against the law to commit suicide, and if you get caught attempting it you'll be imprisoned. Thirteen-and-fourpence, please. Good day."

Those boots!—my first love! Ah! my first love! What a sad—nay, mournful recollection I preserve of thee!

I was eighteen years old—the age when one feels inclined to become enamoured of the whole world. She was beautiful, enchanting, an angel! Red as the golden corn in the month of August, pale as the heroine of a German ballad, with the luminous paleness of the pearls of Basura! Her eyes were blue as the cloudless heavens; what wonder that I adored her! Blue and gold are my favourite colours. I followed her everywhere; I never failed to be present in the drawing-rooms she frequented.

It happened, one day, she was invited to the house of some particular friends of mine, and I resolved that there I would make my formal declaration. What a day I passed! It was entirely taken up with preparations for the great event. I studied telling speeches, I rehearsed fascinating glances in front of my looking-glass. Nor did I neglect my outer man. I had never been handsome—far from it; but on this occasion I wished to appear—well, seductive, to say the least.

My complexion is of the kind stigmatised by heartless and rubicund people as sallow; I applied some rouge. My hair is straight and limp; in the afternoon I borrowed the goffering irons from my landlady and curled my stubborn locks; in the evening I curled them again.

An hour later, with a burning face and a terrible headache, I made my triumphal entry into my friend's drawing-room. Ah! I nearly forgot to mention that I wore a new coat and a pair of magnificently varnished boots. (Of course I had on other garments, but they call for no special attention.) *Oh, those boots!* Little did I think, when I donned them with conscious pride, that they would have proved my perdition. As I have already remarked, Nature has not been altogether kind to me. Beauteous looks she has denied me; she has been sparing with regard to my height; but she has been lavish, extravagantly lavish, with regard to my feet; there is nothing mean or insignificant-looking about *them*.

Now, on this occasion, I had endeavoured to reduce the apparent size of my all too-obtrusive pedal extremities; in a word, my boots were small and tight—horribly tight. Oh, why was not I small and my boots large? I hobbled through the reception-room. I saw her! I had to lean against the wall to save myself from falling. I tried to persuade myself that my emotion was due to excessive rapture at beholding her—but it wasn't; it was owing to my boots.

I had determined to make my declaration during the harmonious cadences of a waltz; or the spasmodic movements of a polka; but how could I dance in such boots?

An idea occurred to me. When a coat is too tight, one can discard one's waistcoat. When a boot pinches, why not act on the same principle? Of course, I don't mean take off your waistcoat, but your——

I stole into an obscure corner of the ante-room. I took off—well, that which troubled me—and, to my joy, I found my boots did not pinch me so much. To take care of the discarded articles, I placed them in my pocket.

Radiantly happy, I returned to the salon. I asked her to give me a waltz; she consented. In five minutes my arm was encircling her delicate waist; and, whilst burying my face in the golden tresses of her hair, I murmured the first phrases of my poetical declaration.

The heavy atmosphere of the room, the excitement of the moment, the radiant light from her blue eyes, overcame me. I was dazed—I paused, feeling faint.

I suddenly remembered I had in my pocket a beautiful handkerchief, embroidered and scented. The scent, I thought, would revive me. I drew it forth with as much grace as I could muster, and held it to my nose.

"*Sir!*" cried the adored one, tearing herself from my arms.

At her exclamation everyone turned to look at me, and all burst into a shout of laughter. I was stupefied. All at once I caught sight of myself in a mirror. Confusion and horror! I was tenderly dabbing my face with my socks!

I will here draw a veil. Two years later I met my early love at Margate. She had married a hosier! Was it fate?

Rejected Suitor (dolefully): "You say you will be a sister to me. What do you mean by that?"

Sweet Girl (cheerfully): "Why when I get married you may send me a nice wedding present, you know."

"Don't I wish I was a member of Parliament, pa."

"Why, Johnny?"

"Because when they want a holiday all they have to do is to vote for it."

She: "You are always talking about the fashions. Now, honestly, do you think that you would know the latest fashions in hats if you were to enter a milliner's shop?"

He: "Certainly."

She: "How?"

He (ruefully): "By looking at the prices."

A SOUL ABOVE MONEY.

Numerous stories have been told of the extravagant charges and haughty behaviour of Worth, the great Parisian man-milliner, but none seems more characteristic than the following:—A lady of high position once ventured to remonstrate with the great man because he had charged her £120 for a ball dress.

"The material," she said, "could be bought for £20, and surely the work of making up would be well paid with five pounds more."

"Madame," replied the milliner, in his loftiest manner, "go to M. Meissonier, the painter, and say to him, 'Here is a canvas, value a shilling, and here are colours, value four shillings. Paint me a picture with these colours on that canvas, and I will pay you one and threepence.' What will he say? He will say, 'Madame, that is no payment for an artist.' I say more. I say, if you think my terms too high, pay me nothing and keep the robe. Art does not descend to the pettiness of the haggler."

LOBSTER CATCHING.

A lobster pot is a simple enough trap. It looks like an immense bird-cage made of wooden slats. Both ends are covered with loose, strong netting made of tarred rope. There is a hole in the middle of each net. The trap is sunk to the bottom by being weighted with stones, and lies on the bottom in a horizontal position. A cod's head, or other tempting bait, is placed under the pot, made stationary by being fastened on with hooks. This soon attracts the lobster, and he reconnoitres about the pot to see how he may get at the aggravating morsel.

In his skirmishing he discovers the opening in the netting at the end of the trap, and he turns and backs himself through it. He no sooner gets inside than he becomes aware that he is in trouble. He loses all desire to sample the bait that tempted him to get in the scrape which he somehow or other has suddenly realised that he is in. He moves about the trap in an agitated manner, looking for a way to get out, just as eagerly as he a few minutes before sought for an opening to get in.

So agitated is he that he forgets that his best pedestrian work is accomplished backwards, and he does not try to get back out of the hole as he came in, but exerts himself to his utmost to get out head first, a feat his enormous claws make impossible. But let this crazed lobster be released from the pot, he will no sooner be out than the bait inside tempts him again, and he once more seeks for a way to get in and seize it, finds the way as before, backs in, is immediately panic-stricken again, and renews his frantic endeavours to escape again.

One of these pots would be no obstacle to the lobster's freedom if it only knew its power, for half a dozen lobsters could smash a pot to pieces in a twinkling, or one sweep of a single lobster's claws would tear the tarred rope netting from the trap as if it had been gauze.

COLD FACTS ABOUT COWBOYS.

Few people have been more written about than the cowboy. The wild tales so freely told of his hare-brained deeds and reckless life have roused an extraordinary amount of interest in him. Travellers have come back from America, and, primed by the marvellous statements made by some imaginative Yankee journalist, have spun out columns of picturesque "copy" regarding men whose lives are in reality utterly unknown to them.

As in the case of most romances, there is just enough truth in these statements to give them an air of veracity, and to impress people who have never been farther west than Land's End with the idea that they are thoroughly reliable. Black sheep there will always be in every flock, and the solitary life which cowboys are forced to lead for months together, far away from any human society but their own, tends to induce a state of mind which is apt to degenerate into arrant rowdiness when the chance of "painting the town red" presents itself.

But cowboys are not all blustering rowdies. I met last year, in New York, a man of good education, who had been driven by family jars to spend some years as a cowboy, but who had returned to civilization again, tired of the hard life. In answer to my inquiries, he spoke somewhat as follows:—

As near as I can say, at a rough guess, there are between 8,000 and 10,000 cowboys in the ranches of the cattle-raising region. No class of men work harder. None are so poorly paid for their services. The tyranny and injustice that they are compelled to submit to at the hands of their employers are as great, if not greater, than that to which any other class of labourers is subjected.

No people have ever been so grossly misrepresented and maligned.

There is as much difference between the genuine cowboy and the disreputable blusterer and bully that writers for the press have made the cowboy out to be, as there is between the honest, hard-working mechanic of this or any other city and the swaggering rowdy or loafer that jostles him in the street.

A wide-awake hat, fringed leggings, ability to sit a mustang well, a six-shooter, and a carcass full of bad rum do not make a cowboy. A cowboy is not a drunkard. He is not a horse-thief nor a highwayman. The men whose faithful endurance guides and guards thousands of heads of valuable cattle through dangerous passes and lonely trails, and who place their lives between their charges and the many enemies they encounter on the lonely plains, are not selected from the [illegible] criminal scum of the country. It is not the cowboy's favourite pastime to ride through border towns and empty his revolver at unoffending and helpless citizens. On the contrary, the true cowboy is a terror to evil-doers of all kinds.

The Mexican cowboy, you know, is generally regarded as the master of the horse and lasso, and it is the custom for people to say, "He is as smart with the rope as a Mexican." Taking it all in all, I think the white cowboy is superior to the Mexican. I have known a herd of 3,000 cattle in charge of Mexicans to be stampeded in a thunder-storm, because the Mexicans were afraid of the thunder and lightning, and threw themselves from their horses, stripped themselves, and lashed their naked bodies with cactus as a penance for some sin, while the herd rushed wildly away in all directions, and hundreds were lost.

It is not an uncommon thing for Mexican cowboys to stop on the trail to punish themselves for their sins. Frequently their wild [illegible] cause a disastrous stampede of the cattle in their charge. I have seen these Mexicans walk barefooted for rods over patches of prickly cactus, while companions followed them and lashed their naked backs with the same thorny plant. They are the most superstitious men you could find.

In Montana especially the cattle of all brands are turned loose in the fall after the beef-gathering has taken place and the fat cattle have been sent off to market. When winter comes on the herds drift together until there will be, maybe, 25,000 or 30,000 cattle bunched. By-and-by there comes a snowstorm, and the grass is covered beneath two feet of snow.

The storm is sure to be followed by a big fall in temperature. The mercury will go to, maybe, thirty degrees below zero. Then all nutriment leaves the tall prairie grass, on which the cattle have been fed since the short grass was snowed under. The herd becomes crazed with hunger, and a stampede follows. The great body of the starving cattle start south like an avalanche, heading straight for localities where homesteads have been taken up in the greatest number.

They bear down on the settlements and besiege the homesteaders, who vainly try to keep them back with their rifles. They shoot the hungry animals down by the hundred, and sometimes manage to hold them in check until their ammunition is exhausted. Then the fight must end. The cattle sweep down on the homesteads, and not only eat up every vestige of hay the homesteaders have stored up for their own small herds, but tear down the houses and outbuildings which the settler builds out of the prairie sod, and devour the roots of the grass that remain succulent in it.

Homesteads, hundreds at a time, are cleaned out by a herd of hungry cattle, quickly and thoroughly, on a single stampede. Then the herd continues on its way, taking the homesteader's herd of two or three hundred with it, and leaves him a homeless, ruined man. The homesteader is discouraged. The wake of the stampeding herd is quickly followed by the agent of a big landowner. He makes the discouraged settler an offer for his claim; and the settler, nine times out of ten, is glad to accept the offer. That is one way in which the rich cattle-raisers obtain such extensive tracts of the most available land.

It is surprising what a trifling thing will start a stampede that may cost many lives and the loss of hundreds of cattle before it can be controlled.

I was coming up the Texas trail once with a party of other cowboys. We had 4,000 cattle in the bunch. One of the boys opened his tobacco-pouch to get a chew. The wind blew a shred or two of the fine-cut out of his fingers; the tobacco floated away and lodged in a steer's eye. In a moment the eye began to smart and the steer got wild. Its antics started others, and in ten seconds the whole herd was surging and dashing about, out of all control. It was two days before we got the herd working quietly again. Two of our best boys were trampled to death and 400 cattle were lost.

Hail-storms are greatly dreaded by cowboys on the trail, especially if they come at night when the cattle are sleeping. If a hailstone happens to strike a steer in the eye a stampede is sure to follow. It is during stampedes that the cowboy has work to do. His one great object is to keep the flying herd together. He uses his mustang dead against the advancing column of frantic cattle at the constant risk of his life, and works the cattle gradually in a circle.

The cowboys all ride to the right around a stampeding herd. If they can get the cattle to running in a circle the first important step in controlling them is accomplished. I have been with a party in a stampede when we were obliged to ride round a herd for a distance of over 200 miles before we got it under control, and then it was only twenty-five miles from where the stampede started. In all that time not one of us took a moment's rest or a [illegible]. Such things are not thought of during a stampede.

Next to a stampede, the cowboy dreads the taking of a herd of cattle across a stream. The cattle are taken over in bunches of twenty-five or thirty. The cowboy strips all his clothing off, and swims his horse along with the cattle. Sometimes the bunch may be taken across and landed on the other side without any trouble; but the cowboy is always expecting to have a case of "milling" on his hands before he gets the bunch across.

I have before now brought a bunch of cattle safely to almost within reach of the opposite shore, when the sudden appearance of a rabbit would scare a steer, and back he would turn. In a moment the whole bunch would be swimming wildly round and round in the middle of the stream. This is called "milling," and it is the work of hours to break up the mill and get the cattle started for the shore again.

In doing this it is often necessary for the cowboy to plunge from his horse and swim about among the cattle, often getting on their horns or astride of them. The water is generally filled with running ice, but the sun is scorchingly hot. The bunch drifts down stream sometimes for miles before the mill is broken.

The cotton-wood trees along these streams are usually loaded with hornets' nests. The moment a hornet sees the cattle floating down the stream under the trees he drops down on them, followed by his fellow-colonists, and they plant their stings wherever they drop. I have been so badly stung while fighting a mill that my head would swell so that I could not wear my hat. A raid of hornets generally breaks up the milling of the cattle attacked, for the animals can't stand the stings, and they make for shore. Many a good cowboy has been drowned in trying to break up a mill in mid-stream. It is not uncommon for a party to spend three weeks or a month in getting a herd of 4,000 cattle across a stream.

This slight sketch gives some idea of cowboy life as it really is, and not as it is depicted by the imaginative writer.

THE FORGOTTEN TUNNEL.

At Brussels the visitor is often struck by the extreme thinness of the earth covering the Braine le Comte tunnel, and wonders why the common sense of the engineers who made the line did not direct them to continue the cutting, and thus avoid a subterranean passage. The mystery is thus explained:—When railways were in their veriest infancy, the Belgian Government sent a party of engineers over to England to acquire experience in construction of the new iron highways, and, on their return, they were instructed to lay out the first railway in that enterprising little kingdom. The work was accordingly put in hand; but, on its completion, one of the engineers exclaimed:

"Good gracious, we have forgotten the tunnel!"

The consternation was general, especially when it was remembered that there was not a single line in England but could boast of a tunnel. What was to be done? Nothing but to construct the long corridor at Braine le Comte, and when it was finished, the earth was put on the top. The tunnel was then the glory of the line.

"Papa, are you growing still?"

"No, my child. Why do you ask?"

"'Cause the top of your head is coming through your hair."

Giles: "I noticed that your friend had his coat collar buttoned up. A cold, I suppose?"

Merrit: "Oh, no. He was calling on his girl, and wore the tie she made for him at Christmas."

Guard: "If you don't keep your head inside the window, you'll have it knocked off going through the tunnel."

Rooney: "Knocked off, is it? Well, it won't be knocked off by any wan the size of youse, ye bandy-legged blue spider."

A short time since a man appeared at the Bank of England staggering under the weight of a heavy bag, which he threw upon the counter and asked to have changed for gold. The bag contained one hundred pounds' worth of fourpenny bits of the year 1841, all of the 6,000 as bright and unworn as when freshly issued from the Mint. The owner explained that the coins were a legacy from his grandmother, who had just died, and who, having a passion for fourpenny pieces, had procured the bagful at the Bank half a century before, and hoarded them carefully till the day of her death. The legatee took his hundred pounds in gold and departed. The next morning he reappeared in a very excited state of mind, and asked for the fourpenny-bits back; "for," said he, "I am told that jewellers will give a shilling apiece for them." He was politely informed that the coins had been "distributed."

HOLIDAY HAUNTS—III.

The following seems to us the best article to hand this week.

The sender,

MR. A. G. MUNRO, B.A.,

CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL,

has therefore been forwarded a cheque for Two Guineas.

A TRAMP THROUGH WESTPHALIA AND THURINGIA.

I HAVE often been compelled by the force of circumstances to spend but little on holiday-making, and yet on looking back and comparing my experiences with other people's, it seems as if I have had a far greater share of enjoyment for the money than the average.

The trip I am now about to describe is not, however, by any means so remarkable for elasticity of financial resource as several others; but I pick it out from the rest on account of its general interest.

It is now nearly three years ago, that with five weeks at disposal for making the usual holiday, came that question (so perplexing to some people as to amount to a mental nightmare), "Where shall I go?"

I have "done" most of the familiar hunting-grounds within a day's journey from London, and not caring to go over the same ground twice—a most inadvisable thing, considering the brevity of life—I opened a map of Europe, spotted the first district near home I had not visited, and packed up.

The region on the map was Westphalia and Thuringia, and though the latter is well known for its forests and watering-places, the former was, to my knowledge in 1888, a closed book. In fact, as I found during the course of my peregrinations (I always peregrinate on foot), a Londoner, or, as the astonished villagers in this purely Teutonic part of the world put it—Ein Herr von London!—is an object of some such curiosity as the animals at the Zoo during periods of refection.

The western extremity of the tour, and consequently my starting-point, was Düsseldorf, and the goal of my ambition, Erfurt. The walk across Westphalia would give me a good chance of comparing village life among those sturdy descendants of Saxon forefathers with that of Hodge in our own rural districts.

The return ticket to Düsseldorf, *viâ* Harwich, is £2 1s. 6d., second class—a journey which, familiar as it is to the great world of commerce, needs no description.

It is some miles past Elberfeld that one feels fairly in Westphalia, and the Teutonic Arcadia begins. Any one buying a map of the province may see the places just as I took them: Elberfeld, Schwelme, Lüdenscheid, Plettenberg, Schmallenberg, Winterberg, Medebach, Corbach, Arohlsen, Warburg, Cassel. Cassel is the eastern limit of Westphalia, and, after visiting Wilhelmshöhe, the seat of captivity of the last French emperor, and renowned for its wondrous waterfalls, I struck out for Thuringia and Erfurt.

To cram into a short article the experiences of that month—twenty-four nights out of the whole were spent in different beds—is simply impossible. Whatever the good Westphalians think England can be like, goodness only knows, judging from the eyes the peasants made at me. One can almost feel their glances piercing one's back after passing them on the road.

But about prices in Westphalia! Here are one or two selected from my note-book. August 7th: Lunch 45 pfennige, sundries 35 pf.; supper, bed, and breakfast next morning at Plettenberg, 4 m. 25 pf., total 5s. 0½d. August 8th: Lunch 70 pf., cigars 40 pf.; supper, bed, and breakfast next morning at Schmallenberg, 3 m. 85 pf., total 4s. 11½d. The bills in Thuringia are almost all equally moderate. Thus, August 17th: Cigars 18 pf., admission to the Wartburg 60 pf.; lunch, supper, bed, and breakfast next morning at Eisenach, 3 m. 60 pf., total 4s. 4½d. The bill at Frederichroda, a somewhat fashionable watering-place, and the birthplace of the late Prince Consort, amounted to 6s. 3d. for the day. The Empress Frederick of Germany was at the time visiting her grandfather, the Grandduke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, in the family schloss of Reinhardtsbrun.

What the prices are in the Thuringian hotels visited by Britons I cannot say, as I only stayed at those where the native element reigns supreme. That eggs, beer, and butter are cheap in many parts of Germany the following item, dated Helza (the first halting-place outside Cassel), will show. Thus—three eggs, bottle of beer, two rolls and butter, total, 6d.

One compliment I must pay the Westphalian landlords—they are supremely hospitable, and this atones for the intense curiosity of the natives. Behold, for example, the good Wirth, at Plettenberg, standing on the threshold of the village Gast-haus. Fat, fair, and fifty, holding a pipe whose bowl touches his knees, he is looking out for the midday coach in the hope of its bringing a passing guest. None of your modern landlords of Switzerland and the Rhine [illegible] Teutonic Wirth of olden times, [illegible] gastronomic welfare as for that of the bristling Westphalian porkers in the yard behind. Long before the bouillon, the infallible Schnitzel, the omelette, and the potatoes have disappeared he has wormed it all out of me, who I am, whence coming, whither going, and introduced me with bated breath as a Herr von London to the village generally.

At Eisenach, I of course paid a visit to the famous Wartburg, and gazed round the room where grand, rough, old Martin Luther threw the inkstand at his Satanic Majesty, but left a mark in the wall instead. Possibly the mark caused by the inkstand, like the blood-stain on the floor at Holyrood, requires renewing from time to time or the legend would expire. Another hospitable landlord greeted me at Frederichroda, as he was going to a tank to catch eels for dinner, and caught me as well.

The scenery in Thuringia I found quite equal to anticipation, the view from the Inselsberg being very fine; whilst, as for Westphalia, although curious and even interesting on account of the villages, scenery pure and simple would not allure the lover of the beautiful, although the road from Lüdenscheid to Winterberg presents many fine pastoral, and even romantic, stretches. After leaving Erfurt, I travelled second-class to Frankfort, and thence to Homburg, [illegible] "Golden Rose," frequented only by Germans, and paid, for the two days, [illegible], drinking the waters and attending the concerts. Homburg is, I should fancy, a most expensive place to remain in, unless a visitor avoids British society. From Homburg to Bingen the railway ticket cost me 2s. 3d., and the route from Bingen home, *viâ* the Rhine, Cologne, and Harwich needs no description. I was away just the month, and the cost of the trip amounted to between thirteen and fourteen pounds.

TEACHER: "How would you describe Henry VIII. of England?"

Student: "I would describe him as a professional widower."

YOUNG MAN: "I see you advertise a vacancy in your establishment. I should like to have a position where there will be a chance to rise."

Merchant: "Well, I want a man to open up and sweep out. You will have a chance to rise every morning at five o'clock."

A STORY comes to me from Athens which is almost too good to be true, but quite too good to be withheld. The Privy Council had a meeting in the room set apart for them in the glaring, white, stuccoed palace. It was evening, and the President had just risen to address his colleagues, laying, according to custom, his gold watch on the table in front of him, so that he might mark time. Suddenly the electric light went out, but after a short interval returned. Then the President discovered that his watch, which was a present from his Royal master, was missing. He lamented, and invited his colleagues to replace the watch, but there was no response. He reminded them that the door was locked and that the watch must be in the possession of one of them. He next put each member on his word of honour to say that he had not it, which little performance was promptly got through. The President then remarked that the situation had become embarrassing, but as he wished to make things easy for the culprit, who had doubtless yielded to temptation in a moment of weakness, he would order the lights to be again extinguished in order to give him an opportunity of restitution. This was done; and when the lights were turned on the President found that not only had he no watch, but that he had also lost his silver inkstand.

NOTICE.

WE wish our readers to contribute the articles under the heading HOLIDAY HAUNTS. They must be not less than 1,000 words (or a column of the paper) in length, and we shall pay TWO GUINEAS for the best to hand every week, publishing it with the author's name and address. Competitions should be marked "Holiday" on the envelopes.

The articles must of course be original, and the actual experiences of readers during holiday trips. There is no reason why anybody should not try for the prize, for we shall not study literary style so much as good matter.

We shall each week award the prize to the competition which seems to us of most general interest and utility. It would be well for competitors to give what information they can regarding the cost of the trips of which they write.

We do not undertake any responsibility with regard to the safe return of unsuitable MSS., though every care will be taken to send back those with which stamped envelopes are enclosed. The rest will be destroyed.

"A TILT WITH RED-TAPEISM."

WE have received, amongst others, the following communications with regard to our last week's article on this subject:—

MR. L. Upcott Gill, of THE BAZAAR, 170, Strand, London, writes:—"I was very glad to read your TILT WITH RED-TAPEISM, and trust that you and your readers will keep pegging away at the Post Office till the present injurious restrictions on the circulation of interesting and harmless literature are things of the past. If the public would only realise how adversely the Post Office regulations as to the postage of a large class of useful journals affects them, they would actively bestir themselves in agitating for a reform.

"I venture to suggest that much might be done, amongst other ways, by every one interested—and who is not?—writing to his Member of Parliament, asking him to use his influence in the getting the present Act of Parliament either liberally interpreted, or, better still, amended, and by writing to the local papers advocating the same course. If the public and the press were to co-operate for the common good, the result would be speedy and certain. The present restrictions hit both the papers and their readers, for on the one hand, the free circulation of all papers not on the 'privileged list' is hindered by the high postage fee, whilst the 'privileged' ones are bound hand and foot and dare not move for fear of being removed, and on the other hand editors are prevented from giving to their readers so much or so popular matter as they otherwise would for the same reasons. One editor told me that, in order to secure the advantage of registration, which, amongst other things, enables a paper to go through the post for a halfpenny, he had to [illegible] and there are very many editors in the same case.

"I do not quite agree with you that the American plan of a halfpenny per pound would be the best. I should be sorry to see anything which would in any way restrict journalistic enterprise, for I am satisfied that such enterprise is beneficial all round; to the readers, who get good value for their money; to the advertisers, who get good returns because of the many readers who are attracted by the good value; to the Post Office, which gets a large revenue from the correspondence, postal-orders, parcels, etc., resulting from the advertisements, which, in turn, result from the many readers who are attracted by the good value; to the proprietor, who gets high prices for his advertisements; for these reasons, to the many persons engaged on, or for the paper, and to all the trades connected with it, because of the additional employment it gives; in short, such journalistic enterprise should, FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD, be encouraged by every possible means, instead of being, as it too often is, strangled by red tape of the worst quality.

"I would not take from any paper a single privilege now enjoyed, but I would make those privileges *free to all*. The way in which I would suggest that this should be done is by passing an Act to amend the Post Office Act, 1870, by omitting from the sixth section the words:—'*Consisting wholly or in great part of political or other news, or of articles relating thereto, or to other current topics.*' The section defining a newspaper would then run:—'Any publication coming within the following description shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed a newspaper (that is to say), any publication, with or without advertisements, subject to these conditions:—That it be printed and published in the United Kingdom; that it be published in numbers at intervals of not more than seven days; that it have the full title and date of publication printed at the top of the first page, and the whole or part of the title and the date of publication printed at the top of every subsequent page.'

"I could say a great deal more on this subject, and show many cases where the public have been great losers by the petty and vexatious use of red-tape as applied to newspapers by the Post Office, but I have already occupied more of your space than I had intended. Permit me to add, that if any of your readers who take an active interest in the question of the Post Office restrictions on the circulation of useful papers as opposed to papers dealing with 'news' only, will send me their names and addresses, I shall be pleased to forward them my latest pamphlet on 'The Registration and Postage of Newspapers.'"

The Editor of THE NEWSAGENT writes:—"Allow me to add a word to your convincing article on 'Post Office Red Tape.' This paper had a lively experience of the registration department, being nine times refused admission on purely technical points. But, personal considerations aside, what earthly reason is there for the Post Office refusing to extend newspaper rates to all serial publications? The present line of selection is most absurd, for by it the authorities are bound to carry such an issue as THE LADY'S PICTORIAL Fashion Number for one halfpenny, while the cost of that issue by rail at cheap rate would be twopence-halfpenny. I quite agree with you that it would be far better to adopt the American principle of charging publications by the weight in bulk, but it would never do to charge, as they do in the United States, one halfpenny per pound. To begin with, that rate does not pay the United States Post Office for the work done; and, secondly, it does not in America include house-to-house delivery, 'second-class mail matter' being only sent to the country Post Office to be called for, while New York and some of the other large places are not included at all in this price, but newspapers posted for these cities are charged a cent apiece. The secretary of the New York Post Office told me, less than two years ago, that it was the rule of their department to make as liberal an interpretation of the term 'newspaper' as possible—series of novels, for instance, being accepted at one cent a pound. The only publications the authorities do not accept at cheap rates are touting circulars and private trade catalogues, and even the latter are often squeezed through by giving them a general name."

ROBINSON'S HYDRO-CARBO-GALVANIC-TERRO-LIGNO-ADAMANTO-UNABRADO-BITUMENOUS-ASPHALTIC-PITCH PAVING.

It was a long name and it took a long time to lay it down. We had a genius named Robinson down at our seaport of Perrywinkleton. He was always inventing things, and the mayor and corporation believed in him because it gave them jobs.

Our mayor was a timber merchant, so Robinson's proposal for a wooden pier was accepted. The pier was built and washed away.

Robinson's idea for an esplanade was taken up because Councillor Prawnham owned the stone quarry, and the esplanade was made, and not washed away, because it died a natural death, and was buried four feet deep in sand.

Robinson's last was a pavement. He had seen asphalte paving in London, and seen it laid, so he came down red-hot, proposed a new pavement for our High Street of an asphalte of his own invention, and, as he artfully contrived a job out of it for the mayor and the whole town council, the plan was carried unanimously, and the next week the High Street became chaotic.

That street was in ruins for two months, during which it was picked up, rammed down, sifted, concreted, wetted, dried, smoothed, ironed, mangled, and then it was ready for Robinson's pavement.

For weeks the town was full of horrible, black smoke. All the blacks in London seemed to have come down to the seaside for a change, and were always settling on the ladies' noses, when they did not prefer the men's clean collars.

There were ten great cauldrons in the High Street, and round these ten cauldrons as many black demons were always busy at work cooking Robinson's patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving.

Great fires were always burning underneath, smoke rose in clouds, and the black demons kept slowly breaking up and putting in bits of something very nasty, which smelt nastier, and stirring it up with big spoons, and when it was done, ladling it out like soup into big pots, which other men carried between them, and made a mess with in the road.

For they were just like so many dirty children making black puddings and mud pies in the gutters, pouring out the nasty stuff, and patting it down and smoothing it till the people in the town began to use hard words, and one wicked man even went so far as to say that he wished Robinson was boiled in his patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving.

At last the street was declared paved, and the new paving was opened by the mayor and corporation, who walked over it in their fur-trimmed gowns, carrying wands, and preceded by the town crier with his bell.

After this triumphal procession the volunteer band played "God Save the Queen," without the drum and trombone, for the drum had got the toothache, and the trombone, who was the head porter at the railway station, couldn't get a half-holiday on account of the influx of visitors who had come to see Robinson's patent hydro-carbo-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving.

While the weather remained cold, Robinson's paving did well enough; but in the spring it began to soften, and by the time the summer came it was like dough, excepting that when it got hold of anything it held on like grim death.

A man would attempt to walk across it, and would sink in; then he would find that he couldn't move either leg. Then he would cry for help, and somebody would push a plank out towards him, and he would struggle out of his boots and walk ashore.

Miss Mary Ann Wellington had a sad accident there, for she came to grief going across. People warned her that it wasn't safe, but she wouldn't believe it, and went laughing across to try; for if you tell a woman a thing is not safe she's sure to want to try it.

Well, she hadn't taken more than four steps before she squeaked and then she squalled, for her high heels had stuck fast, and her tight dress so hampered her that she went down backwards, sank in, and lay there calling for help, like a bas-relief come to life on a marble temple.

Of course all the young fellows in Perrywinkleton came to help her, for Mary Ann was very pretty; but how to get her out they didn't know. It was easy enough as far as her head, for she'd got on a fashionable ulster, and they had only to unbutton it and unlace her boots; but then there was her hair.

Now, if that young lady had made an affidavit every day in the week that she did not wear false hair, no one would have believed her; but when they came to get her out of the asphalte, there was the test. It was, alas! real as real, and they had to take scissors and cut it all close to her head before they could get her free; and, when they did, Mary Ann was a sight.

There were four-and-twenty young men affectionate to Mary Ann before that accident, and they all laid their hearts upon the altar of her love, but after Mary Ann had been carried home cropped, there were four-and-twenty young men who weren't in love with Mary Ann, and they all cried off.

There was a row that night, and the whole street was alarmed, for these twenty-four young men all went to the new paving armed with chisels, each intent on getting a bit of Mary Ann's hair as a token of his blighted love, and they all got stuck fast and fought with their chisels till the fire brigade came and began to play upon them. Then they gave it up and made backs, when number twenty-four walked out of his boots and over the other fellows' backs to shore; number twenty-three walked out of his boots and over the other fellows' backs to shore; then number twenty-two had his turn, and twenty-one, and twenty, right down to number one, so that all their lives were saved, and they all married and had two children, and lived happy ever after.

But, of course, they didn't all marry Mary Ann, who commenced a breach of promise of marriage case against the inventor of that asphalte pavement, and got heavy damages, too.

Johnson's mule tried to cross it one day, and was captured tight as wax by the legs. I was sorry for that mule, for he was such an intelligent beast. No one could get to him to feed him, so, being of an enterprising disposition, he set to and licked the asphalte.

By-and-bye he found out that there was no nutriment to be got out of it any more than [illegible], so he began to sound his trumpet, beginning to neigh like a horse, and then changing wildly and ending in a regular jackass bray.

Next day he took to making signals with his ears, for he was there still, and he couldn't walk out of his shoes, as they were nailed on. He evidently knew the military signalling code, for he'd shove one ear forward and the other backward, and then both forward, and end by sticking them both out sideways, which according to the "Book of Military Code Signals," vol. IV., chapter 27, page 92, signifies: "Now, then, aren't you going to pull a fellow out?"

But no help came; so he rested his ears and took to signalling with his tail—wonderful.

That tail stood right out, straight up, sideways, t'other sideways, perpendicular, slantingdicular, horizontal, duplex, vertical, very tickle, much more tickilish, jewelled in four holes—every position you could name, and no help came.

Last of all, his signals got so plain that they launched the lifeboat, and it stuck fast; while no sooner did they lower their oars and try to get her along, than they stuck too, so the crew had to waddle to the pavement along planks.

Then, as the signals for help went on, they brought out the rocket apparatus, and fired lines over his back; but, of course, they were of no use to a mule who couldn't even kick. They couldn't dig him out, so they put up a derrick, and a man, swinging in the air, reached the animal, and fixed the rope round his forelegs. Then they hoisted him, and the mule rose with a thick rope of pitch hanging from each leg, so that, by the time he got forty feet up, he looked like a mule with an extraordinary tendency to grow in the legs. Then the tackle slipped, and the asphalte was so elastic that the mule flew back into the old place with a "chock." But they got him out at last, without his shoes.

The way the cats stuck in that asphalte was something awful, and the noise worse. For no sooner was a cat fast by its paws, than bow-bow at it went a dog, and he was fast too, when they went on talking to one another till they were smothered, which wasn't very soon. Ever so many cats and dogs were caught, and they perished, stuck by their feet; so that after a while, the whole street was filled with boots and cat skeletons, and other rubbish sticking upon the surface, until it looked like a jungle.

One hot day, a boy, running after his top, fell on the pavement face downwards, and was clutched fast. They saved him by cutting his clothing open down the back and taking the boy out, like a pea from the pod; but he left the tip of his nose in the paving.

So there was a row, and then the authorities thought they would take the pavement up. It couldn't be cut or dug, so the workmen undertook to roll it over, as you would roll over a sheet of music; but when they had gone forty feet it sprung back over the men and assumed its old shape, except that there were four lumps on the surface where the buried workmen lay.

At last they hitched twenty or thirty horses to one end of the pavement, and hauled it away. Then they slid it into the sea, and it lodged upon a shoal, and there it remained permanently. In the course of a year soil formed on it, and it is now rather a handsome island, and it is valuable, too.

No doubt it will be utilized by a mining company that wants to go into the business of getting out leather.

There are veins of old boots in that island which would make the fortune of anybody who knew how to work them; and we are not certain but that it would pay to get out the cats' bones for fertilisers.

Somehow or another, there was something wanting; I can't say what. But, taken altogether, Robinson's patent hydro-galvanic-terro-ligno-adamanto-unabrado-bitumenous-asphaltic-pitch paving was not a success.

THE BIGGEST SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE WORLD.

For the biggest of big things we are generally bidden to look across the water, but in Sunday schools there would appear to be an exception to the rule. Our town of Stockport has the credit of possessing the largest Sunday School in the world, and what is more, an American has been found who admits it. This gentleman, who had an acquaintance with some of the best Sunday Schools in the United States, visited the one at Stockport, and gave it as his opinion that it "licked creation."

It is a huge plain building, arranged more for accommodation than artistic effect. It is four storeys high, and contains from seventy to eighty class-rooms and halls, besides an upper room capable of seating 3,000 people. There are in connection with the School some 5,000 scholars and teachers.

From the origin of the School it has trained over 6,000 teachers and over 100,000 scholars! Men and women who have been born and bred in Stockport, have, together with their children and grandchildren, attended the School all their lives. One old gentleman has been at the School sixty-five years, having commenced when he was an infant scholar of five.

There can be no doubt that the School is a great power for good amongst the young, and everything that will foster a broad and generous spirit in the scholars is encouraged. There are three libraries in connection with the School, and a periodical [illegible] of pure literature, which sells some 20,000 [illegible] every year. Every effort is made to free the minds of the scholars from sectarian bias, and ministers of all denominations are brought from far and near to address the School.

Scholars are to be found in all parts of the world, and the School has always been noted for the deep and life-long devotion of the men and women to whose unwearied exertion the prosperity it has achieved is due. In its records are found the names of those who make this institution the chief aim of their existence; and although the burden of years might have been pleaded as an excuse from active service, they have laboured on until the end of their lives.

The history of the School is so bound up in the history of the town that it is almost impossible to dissever them. Many of the leading men at the School have either passed through the mayoral dignity or fulfilled the highest offices in political and civil life. The poverty or wealth of the town has always shown itself at once in the monetary condition of the School, and the various epochs of a public nature have been celebrated as much in the walls of the School as in the town itself.

The Stockport Schools were founded in 1784 on undenominational grounds. In the Rules and Orders then published, the following quaint regulations appear:—"That the town should be divided into six parts; that there should be at least one school in each part; that two subscribers should visit each school, and report to the committee; that the scholars should attend from nine to twelve in the forenoon, and from one to the hour of worship in the afternoon, when the teachers should conduct them to church or chapel, and return to school again until six o'clock; the teachers to be paid 1s. 6d. per day; and that the children of Protestant dissenters should, if possible, have masters of their own persuasion, and 'choose their own mode of catechising.'"

Nowadays there are, of course, no paid teachers, and the little learners are not kept at their labours as long as they would be at a day school. In the year 1835, the Jubilee of the present School was held. It was a time of great rejoicing, and the event was commemorated in practical ways. A subscription was set on foot for the raising of £1,500 to pay off an existing debt, and a medal was struck bearing on one side a representation of the School, and on the other the following words:—

"Erected, with its branch schools, for £20,000. Annual Expenditure £500. Registered scholars 70,000. Teachers 3,500. Now contains 5,000 children and 449 teachers. Open to all. Class book, the Bible."

The Jubilee tea for the scholars was a big undertaking, and people who are fond of figures will be glad to know what Lancashire children can do in this direction. Provided was:—

352 lbs. corned beef for sandwiches.
100 lbs. boiled ham for ditto.
1,220 lbs. spiced bread.
1,150 lbs. plain bread.
108 lbs. butter.
348 lbs. sugar.
60 lbs. tea.
108 quarts cream and milk.
1,700 Seville oranges.
625 gallons of tea.

The teachers and scholars have always had an annual procession through the town, and everybody turns out to see the thousands of processionists.

The wonder in connection with the Stockport Sunday School is that an institution so large should, from year to year, maintain its position both spiritually, financially, and numerically.

HOME NOTES.

A PAGE MORE PARTICULARLY FOR LADIES.

ISOBEL will be glad to answer, in this page, questions of general interest upon household matters, so far as space permits. Envelopes should be marked HOME NOTES.

To Clean Carved Ivory. Make a paste of sawdust damped with water and a few drops of lemon juice; lay it thickly on the carving, let it dry thoroughly, and then brush it off with a soft but firm brush. This process cleans ivory very effectually. (*Reply to* LUCY).

Cheese Sandwiches. One cup of grated cheese, one half-cup of butter, one quarter cup of cream, one loaf of bread cut in very thin slices. Work the cheese, butter, and cream in a bowl till you have a thick, smooth paste. Spread this on half of each slice of bread, turning the other half over.

To Get Oil Out of Boards. Mix together fuller's earth and soap lees, and rub it into the boards. Let it dry, and then scour it off with some strong soft soap and sand, or use lees to scour it out with. It should be put on hot, which may easily be done by heating the lees. (*Reply to* W. E. R.)

Angel Pudding. Two ounces of flour, two ounces of powdered sugar, two ounces of butter melted in half a pint of new milk, two eggs; mix well. Bake the above in small patty-pans until nicely browned, and send to table on a dish covered with a serviette. A little powdered sugar should be sifted over each pudding, and slices of lemon served with them. The eggs must be well beaten before they are added to the other ingredients.

Dusting and Sweeping. In dusting do not forget the backs of pictures hanging on the walls. A skewer used under the edges of carpets and a slightly dampened cloth or sponge will save much dust and labour if occasionally used in place of a broom. Never shake a mat or rug in the room. Remove them to the yard, hang them on a line, and beat well; afterwards lay them on the grass or clean walk, and brush them thoroughly with the broom. They will last as long again, and look brighter and fresher after this treatment.

Sole au Gratin. Take one or two medium-sized soles, remove the brown skin, and place the fish, skin downwards, on a buttered baking-tin, dust over with salt and pepper, sprinkle with chopped parsley, and add a squeeze of lemon, cover rather thickly with browned bread-crumbs, put a tiny piece of butter here and there, pour round half a glass of sherry, with a very little stock, and bake in a moderate oven for half an hour. Then lift carefully on to the dish with a slice, and pour round a sauce made with stock, add to it the liquor from the fish, half a teaspoonful of essence of anchovy, a little lemon juice and chopped parsley; add another tablespoonful of sherry if necessary.

Savoury Sausages. Cut the remains of the meat from a cold leg of mutton, either roasted or boiled, and mince it extremely small. Season it with pepper, salt, powdered mace, and nutmeg. Add to it six ounces of beef suet, the picked leaves of a bunch of sweet herbs, three shalots or a blade of garlic, two anchovies boned and scalded, one dozen oysters bearded, all chopped very small; a quarter of a pound of fine bread-crumbs, one tablespoonful of good gravy, and the yolks and whites of two eggs well beaten. Mix all well together and put into little pots for use. The mixture can be rolled into balls or sausage shapes, and fried for breakfast, or put into sausage skins and boiled. The skins must be pricked in several places to prevent them breaking. When sufficiently done they should be laid on straws or on a drainer to drain.

Don't Bother the Sick. Don't bother a sick person when he is doing anything, nor interrupt him when speaking. Never lean against, sit upon, or shake the bed upon which a sick person lies. Never read to the sick, except when they ask it; then read what they wish, and do it slowly and distinctly. Give a little variety to the room by occasionally changing things. If flowers are liked, get them, but beware of the effect of very sweet perfumes. Give little food at a time but give often, if craved. As a rule invalids have slow appetites in the morning. You can sustain them till they get a desire for something substantial by giving them a little beef tea or light broth. Never leave untasted food at the patient's bedside from meal to meal. The sight of what is not craved is repellent. Don't fill a patient's plate. Have tempting quantities temptingly prepared and served. Cook with care. As a rule you can afford to give a patient a little of whatever is craved unless the physician forbids. Sometimes the craving is morbid; then you can refuse to gratify it. Carefully watch the bedding. Keep the sheets clean and dry. Change the clothing often. Never let a bed get damp or foul. Don't load the patient with bedclothing.

Potato Rolls. When mashed potato is left from the table, add one or two eggs, according to quantity, a little salt, pepper, butter, and flour; mix into small balls, and bake three-quarters of an hour on a buttered pan. These rolls make a cheap and nice breakfast relish.

Rice Moulds. Boil six ounces of rice in a quart of milk for three-quarters of an hour, or until the rice is tender, pour it into teacups which have been previously dipped into cold water, and, when cold, turn the rice moulds out into a glass dish; arrange them nicely, and pour a boiled custard over them, after spreading some strawberry jam at the bottom of the dish.

Mock Venison. Bone and skin a loin of mutton; stew the bones with two anchovies, one or two onions, a bunch of sweet herbs, some white pepper, mace, a crust of bread, and a carrot; strain it off, and put it in a stewpan, with the fat side of the mutton downwards; then add half a pint of port wine, and let it stew till tender; brown it in the dripping-pan, and serve it in the sauce.

How to Clean a Copper Boiler. Get half a pound of potash and put it into a vessel, then pour one quart of boiling water over it. This done, allow to soak for half an hour, and get a good hard scrubbing-brush and dip it into the potash; rub well round the sides of the boiler; let it soak a few minutes, then scrub again. Be careful not to dip the fingers in the potash, because it may burn them. (*Reply to* R. S.)

To Clean a Woollen Shawl. Scrape or cut up one tablet of Sunlight soap, and boil it in a small quantity of water. When sufficiently cool beat it with the hand, at the same time mixing it with two tablespoonfuls of spirits of turpentine, and one dessert-spoonful of hartshorn. Wash the shawl thoroughly in this, then well rinse in cold water, and, when all the soap is out, in salt and water. (This need only be done when the shawl contains delicate colours.) Three-fold the shawl between two sheets, being careful not to let two folds of the shawl come together. Mangle, and afterwards iron with a very cool iron. (*Reply to* L. B.)

Window Seats. Everyone knows how delightful are the deep window seats which abound in old stone houses in the country. It is very easy to arrange such seats before any window, and they are a very attractive part of the furniture if properly upholstered. In a sitting-room where there is a lack of cupboards, if these seats are made in some way to open, they form a very good stowaway place for various articles. The best form for them is a low, narrow, divan shape several inches lower than the bottom of the window. Chintz, rep, or any material used in the upholstery of the room is suitable for covering them. The top should be stuffed with hair or something else to make a soft seat and may be tufted. A simple valance reaching to the ground finishes the sides of the seats.

Some Uses for Borax. Blankets and furs put away well-sprinkled with borax, and done up air-tight, will never be troubled with moths. A little borax put in the water before washing red or red-bordered tablecloths and napkins will prevent their fading. Ringworm will yield to borax treatment. Apply a strong solution of borax three times a day; also dust on the fine dry powder very often. Silver spoons and forks in daily use may be kept bright by leaving them in strong borax water several hours. The water should be boiling when they are put in. Put a teaspoonful of borax in your rinsing water; it will whiten the clothes and also remove the yellow cast on garments that have been laid aside for two or three years. For washing fine, nice flannels, nothing will cause them to look so nice as borax in the water—a tablespoonful of borax to a pail of water being the right proportion. Always wash baby's little flannel shirts, skirts, etc., in this. Borax water is excellent for sponging either silk or woollen goods that are not soiled enough to need washing.

Baby's First Steps. A young child's bones are soft and cartilaginous, and keeping a poor thing tied up against a chair, when it ought to be lying on its back kicking the air and strengthening its limbs, or crawling on the floor, is positively injurious and sinful. It is done with the view of teaching it all the sooner to maintain the erect attitude; but bent legs may be the result, and however strong a bent-legged man may be, he certainly does not look elegant. Let the child creep, then, and as soon as he finds that he can pull himself cautiously up and stand by the side of a box or chair, he will do so; this is the only safe and natural process. Soon after this he will, if encouraged, venture upon the first step. Let him creep, and when he walks and falls laugh at him; do not rush to pull him up. Children are not at all brittle, and they ought to learn at a very early age to depend upon the strength nature has endowed them with. Some nurses and mothers tie a band round the poor child's waist, and then push him, kicking and sprawling, on before them, during which time the child looks as graceful as the golden lamb which bosters hang out as a sign.

Cowslip Wine. [illegible] gallons of water with twenty-five pounds of loaf sugar, and leave it to work for thirty-six hours. Then put into a tub the juice and peel of nine Seville oranges and [illegible] gallons of cowslip flowers or pips. Over these pour the sugar and water, and leave them to stand for a week, stirring them daily. Afterwards strain, then stir in a quart of brandy, put the wine into a cask, leave it for two months, and then bottle it. (*Reply to* [illegible].)

Potted Meat. Take any cold roasted or boiled meat, remove all gristle, hard pieces, and fat from it, mince, and then pound it in a mortar, with a little butter, reduced gravy, and a spoonful of Worcestershire sauce; beat it to a smooth paste, seasoning during the process with pounded cloves and allspice, mace, or grated nutmeg, salt, and a little cayenne. Put the mixture into pots, press it close down, cover with clarified butter, and keep it in a cool, dry place.

Useful Hints. Spirits of ammonia inhaled will often relieve a severe headache. ——A few drops of lime-water added to the food of a teething child act beneficially on the infant's digestion.——Frying pans should be cleaned by being scoured with salt the moment they are done with, and wiped clean with a cloth.——Linoleum will keep double the time and look very much better, for being beeswaxed and polished, after the fashion of stained floors, only with a somewhat thinner preparation. ——An excellent way of cooking eggs is to break them into boiling milk without beating; cook slowly, stirring now and then. When done soft, turn into a dish, and add a little pepper, salt, and butter.

Spring Soup. Have a small cabbage (white heart is best), one carrot, half a turnip, the flower of a small cauliflower, two leeks, a head of celery, one onion, pepper and salt, a quarter of a pound of butter, two quarts of water, four thin slices of bread and butter, and a tablespoonful of brown sugar. Shred all the vegetables very finely, put them into a saucepan with a quarter of a pound of butter, a little pepper and salt, and the sugar, and let them cook for fifteen or twenty minutes; then add two quarts of cold water, and let them boil gently for one hour with the lid off. Butter three or four slices of bread, put them in the oven to brown. Put these slices of bread into the soup tureen, and pour the soup on to them. Any fresh vegetables in season can be used; lettuce is very good.

Iron Bedsteads are better than wooden ones, as they do not harbour insects, are easily cleaned, and very durable. The laths may be prevented from becoming rusty by laying a piece of coarse canvas or old carpet over them; waterproof materials should not be used under the mattress, as they prevent the damp escaping, and this causes the bedding to decay quickly, while the bed remains cold and damp. On getting up in the morning the bed-clothes should be thrown across the foot of the bed, or on the backs of some chairs, and aired for two or three hours before the bed is made; making the bed immediately on rising is a very bad plan, as the sheets are charged with the moisture which has passed out of the skin during the night. Mattresses are cheaper and more healthy to use than soft feather beds; and curtains which keep the foul air that has been breathed round the sleepers should not be used.

As Far as I Can Tell, without seeing your baby, I should say that she is suffering chiefly from wind. I strongly recommend you to use Dr. Day's feeding bottles. Any chemist should be able to supply you with a couple, or you can get them direct from the maker, Mr. Edmunds, 23, Southampton Buildings, High Holborn, London. I have tried these feeding bottles for my own baby, and prefer them to any others. Few mothers realise the immense importance of using a feeding bottle that can be cleaned easily and thoroughly. There is no more common cause of illness in babies than neglect of attending to the cleanliness of their bottles. In Dr. Day's there is no screw, and, consequently, no thread in which impurities can lurk. The place of the usual glass stopper is taken by a plain indiarubber plug, which tapers slightly, so that it can be fitted exactly into the neck of the bottle without any trouble. The inside of the bottle is perfectly plain, and therefore gives no opportunities for the accumulation of particles of food, provided that the smallest amount of trouble is taken about the use of the brushes which accompany each bottle. In the neck there is a small vent-hole which ensures the proper amount of atmospheric pressure, and consequently the free flow of the food at all times. Altogether these feeding bottles are as perfect as anything of the kind can be. As you do not seem very learned on the subject of babies, you cannot do better than invest half-a-crown in Dr. Day's book called, HOW TO PREVENT THE DISEASES OF BABYHOOD. (*Reply to* YOUNG MOTHER.)

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THE [illegible] Mr. Maddison, St. Augustine's Vicarage, Tynemouth, winner of our 1st Cyclist's Prize, writes:

"[illegible] I hasten to acknowledge receipt of your letter informing me that I have been awarded the Prize for the Amateur on the best Humorous Poem by an Amateur for Cyclists. Though I have never [illegible] part in various [illegible] cycling at all, I have never attempted any of the three wheeler, and should prefer, however, [illegible] cycle for the prize. As soon as Messrs. Hickman, Herbert & Cooper's [illegible] I will proceed to make a choice of a machine, and I [illegible] the rest. I must add that I am [illegible] distinction of gaining this prize in [illegible]."

In a [illegible] Mr. Maddison informs us that his [illegible] upon A PREMIER ROADSTER No. 1 THE [illegible] We have therefore requested Messrs. Hickman, Herbert & Cooper to forward this machine to Mr. Maddison, carriage paid. We hope the [illegible] may for many years to come, serve to pleasantly remind him of the competition in which he won it.

WE have made one or two slips lately in the important matter of the order of dates, and have been duly rapped by observant and well-posted readers. This [illegible] gives every one a chance of displaying such knowledge to good purpose. Somewhere in the course of this issue a date is printed wrongly. To the [illegible] who points out this mistake we will send a gold-plated pencil case, until five and twenty have been awarded. Mark envelopes DATE.

WE [illegible] in reference to our offer of pencil cases to the person who of a word of six letters which spelt the same backwards and forwards, in our issue for week ending May 9th, J. H. mentions REVIVER, a word of seven letters, with this peculiarity. We have therefore sent him a pencil case, and we will give one to the sender of any other English word, of seven or more letters in length, which reads the same both ways. If any word reaches us in duplicate, the pencil case will go to the first correspondent from whom it is received.

W. J.—The [illegible] is the only instance we know of a domesticated animal which is not to be found anywhere in a wild state.

F. P. B. forwards us a spray of genuine four-leafed Irish shamrock, for which we are much obliged, reminding us that a wish uttered when it is plucked is sure to come true. A correspondent informs us that her wish in this particular case was to the effect that our circulation may be more than doubled by the end of the year, we sincerely hope that her faith in the lucky properties of the little green leaf is not misplaced.

H. W. M. sends the following description of the way in which two foxes were recently seen to [illegible]. Each fox was at first about eighty yards [illegible] one on each side. At short intervals [illegible] fox started the other struck the ground sharply with his fore paws, would number [illegible] and then fox on [illegible] a few yards never during the moment, [illegible] so that [illegible]. He would then strike the [illegible] as the hare [illegible]. This was repeated many times, [illegible] fox was more than ten yards [illegible] then [illegible] towards her, and [illegible] in their jaws the next moment.

H. W. [illegible] an article in your paper on Welsh [illegible] is HERESIS IN HOLLAND, I thought it would [illegible] some of the readers of P. W. to know how the Welsh treat the robin redbreast, or, as it is [illegible] known in Wales, the robin [illegible]. This little bird is held in great veneration in all parts of Wales. Mothers teach their children not to [illegible] the nests or kill one of them, and a [illegible] doing so is looked down on by his companions as a mean contemptible fellow. The [illegible] with which this bird is treated by the country people is amazing. It is no unusual sight, in some of the country farmsteads, to see several of these birds feeding in the house, no one ever thinking of molesting them. I knew of one [illegible] gentleman to whose house a couple of robins [illegible] regularly for their food for seven years. The reason for the veneration in which this bird is held by Welsh folk is this:—According to tradition, a Welsh army on a day on part of the [illegible] of the Llewelyn [illegible], and a drummer, who had [illegible] his supper on his drum, had left some remnants of them and fell asleep. In the [illegible] of the morning a robin alighted on the drum-head, and in its [illegible] by pecking crumbs from it, that the sleeping drummer was aroused. He [illegible] the army advancing, roused the camp, and the Welsh defeated their foes. So to this day Welshmen tell how the robin saved their army."

THE FAGGED COUPLE PRIZE.

[illegible] Bellwood, of Eccleston Street, S.W., [illegible] from the letter which we addressed to [illegible] this week, the first prize of the £100 offered [illegible] by Mr. Bellwood and [illegible]. They [illegible] naturally [illegible] at [illegible] made by their friends on their behalf.

Mr. Bellwood [illegible] that he and their [illegible] deposits of the [illegible] of the Southport Branch of the Mon[illegible] and District Building Company. We [illegible] to put matters in connection with the [illegible], and hope to be able to definitely announce [illegible] that the £100 is waiting in his charge for the [illegible] of the fortunate couple who [illegible].

J. H. is the proud father of a five months' old baby, and being a domesticated man, was engaged the other day in cutting his offspring's nails. To him enter two old ladies of his acquaintance, who implored him to desist, one alleging that the practice, if persisted in, "would make the child light fingered," the other contenting herself with the vague assertion that "it was unlucky." Perturbed by these stern warnings, our correspondent asks us whether there is any reason why he should not keep his child's nails short?——None whatever. On the contrary, every rule of cleanliness and tidiness points to the desirability of doing so, as strongly as every rule of common sense points to the absurdity of paying the slightest attention to such ridiculous superstitions as those mentioned to J. H.

M. W. remarks: "Your last page varies a good deal. Sometimes I find it much more interesting than at others. Some weeks there are things in it that make me laugh, then again there may not be a smile in it. How is this? Do different members of the staff tackle it, each for a week?"——No; this page has always hitherto been the work of one individual. But he thinks that any charge of dullness in it should rather be laid to his readers' fault than his own. Some way back in the world's history it was found that bricks cannot be made without straw, neither can interesting or amusing replies be written to letters that do not exist. Week by week we get from our readers certain material, with the help of which this page is filled. Is it not reasonable to expect that, as this material must vary, so must the matter resulting from it?

WE fear that a great many readers must think that we are seriously neglectful of our own interests, and regardless of their kind efforts to make the paper better known among their friends. We refer to those who have written lately asking for specimen copies. A large number of such requests remain unfilled for the simple reason that we have not got enough specimen copies by us. So many new channels for the profitable disposal of them have presented themselves lately that we have been quite unable to keep pace with demands. We trust that these few words will [illegible] our good-natured readers that we are not [illegible] to their kindness, and we hope that they will not [illegible] waiting a little for the copies [illegible] will be despatched at the earliest possible moment.

REGAR[illegible]—The tip of the tongue is the most sensitive part of the human body, and is followed in this respect by the finger tips. The least sensitive parts are the back and the outside of the thigh.

WE hope that those of our readers who send in HOLIDAY HINTS competitions will endeavour to make them as practical as possible by the inclusion of probable expenditure. Naturally, we do not want articles consisting merely of railway fares and hotel bills, but it is quite easy to give an approximate idea of a holiday's cost without in any way detracting from the interest; and when this is done, it stands to reason that the value of a description is very much increased.

I. L.—Have a brake fitted to your machine, by all manner of means. There is no more fruitful cause of accidents than riding cycles with no brakes. Even the best rider cannot, when going fast downhill, pull up so quickly as he may very easily find necessary without the assistance of a brake, and an indifferent rider would often be simply unable to pull up at all under such circumstances.

G. A. P.—It is impossible to give any exact answer to your question. How many natives of this country are there abroad? So far as can be gathered, however, from various census returns and consular reports the number must be about 4,000,000. Nearly three quarters of these have taken up their abode in the United States, and not far short of another million live in our own colonies and dependencies. Of European countries, France contains most Britons. About 30,000 are settled there, while in Germany there are but a third of this number, and in Italy only a fifth.

R[illegible]—The [illegible] found in the upper and [illegible] in which men marry women of [illegible] so as to call for comment whenever they occur, but I have, from time to time, [illegible] instances amongst the working classes where the contrary is the case that I have long held the idea that with them the man about to marry prefers a mate of maturer years than himself. As a [illegible] canvasser in a large London district, in which the inhabitants almost entirely belong to the working classes, I had an opportunity of confirming my opinion, so far as one locality is concerned. I found that, although the majority is not a large one, still in the greater number of cases the wife is older than the husband. Can any of your readers suggest the reason of this? My own idea is that, as a rule, women accept the first eligible suitor who comes in their way. As they have not themselves the right of proposing, they do not like to run the risk of refusing an offer when one does come. Most men fall in love in their teens, and at that period of life it is easily by a woman older than themselves that they are captivated. Those in the higher social grades usually have several years to wait before they can maintain a wife in a similar position to their friends around them, and find with advancing years that their affections have been transferred to one who still retains the bloom of youth; but the labourer or artisan, on the contrary, frequently is in possession of wages, on arriving at manhood, almost or quite as high as he will ever receive, and therefore promptly ties the nuptial cord. Is my theory correct?

E. W. AND OTHERS.—You will see from the notice on page 694 that we have fallen in with your suggestions.

T. P.—The Pocket Typewriter is a very ingenious little machine, though you must not imagine that it will enable you to operate as well as you could with a large typewriter. But there is no reason why, with a little practice, you should not obtain a very fair rate of speed, and the writing executed with this machine has the great advantage of being as legible as print. We have no hesitation whatever in saying that we consider the Pocket Typewriter well worth the half-guinea asked for it. Few better presents could be selected for a boy.

BATS.—The average summer and winter temperatures of London show a variation of twenty-five degrees.

OWING to the fact of our having to go to press earlier on account of the Whitsuntide holidays, it is impossible to announce the pencil-case winners in the "ie-ei" competition. The result will appear next week.

T. H.—Few things are more exaggerated than the size of serpents. No doubt your brother honestly thought that the one he saw was 100 feet long, but there is equally no doubt that his fear and agitation acted in the same way as a powerful magnifying glass would have. The largest serpent of which accurate measurements have been taken was thirty-seven feet in length, and it is certain that very few of these reptiles ever reach a length of forty feet.

P. P.—It is quite true that fish are attracted by light to a [illegible] is this is thought that the electric light is now [illegible] played in deep-sea fishing, as it has been found that if a light is sunk in the water it attracts fish from all around. The difficulty hitherto has been to prevent the nets becoming entangled with the lines that conduct the current to the lamp; but a light has been recently invented that can be towed overboard free from all attachments.

We find the [illegible] in this page for answering [illegible] reply by post to those [illegible] stamped envelopes with their letters are [illegible]. All general enquiries will be [illegible]. I. [illegible] we cannot give.

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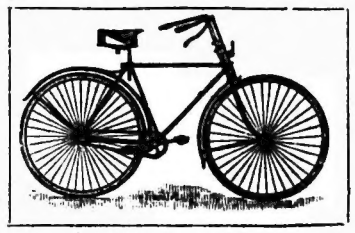

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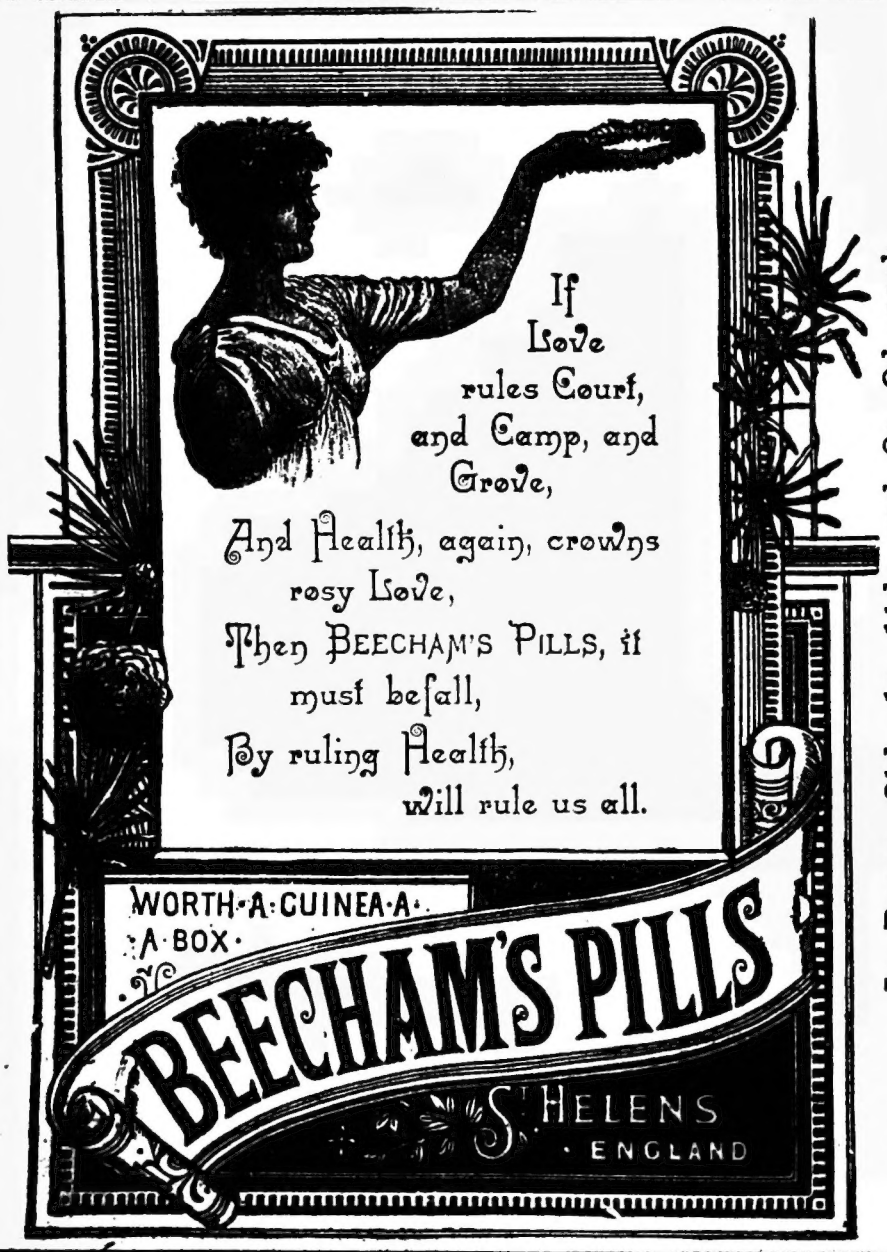

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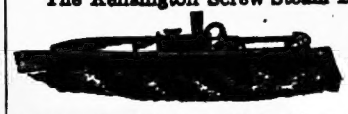

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